Shepherd's Bush CHRONICLE

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Our chef scoops major London food award

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■ ALL WRITE ON THE NIGHT: A writing festival with a difference is to be staged at The Lyric Hammersmith on Friday and Saturday this week in which five young writers will compete against five professional writers for the title of audience favourite. But the audience won't know the author of each play when they cast their votes. The play with the most votes wins. Five 10-minute plays, each in the theme of power, will be performed by professional actors on each of the two nights (from 8pm). The young writers taking part are aged between 10 and 25. Among the professional writers taking part are Arinze Kene, Isley Lynn, Luke Barnes, Phoebe Eclair-Powell and Londoner Somalia Seaton, *pictured*.
Picture: Robert Day

Kids' champions

Inspector hails new scheme to protect children

■ Sir Michael Wilshaw

BY JACK DIXON
jack@londonweeklynews.co.uk

TOP government inspectors have praised a pioneering initiative to improve the lives of children and young people in Hammersmith and Fulham.

Ofsted chiefs urged the rest of London to follow the borough's lead, after a cross-council partnership delivered "outstanding" results.

Inspectors lauded the "exemplary leadership" and "high quality social work" that has led to a string of success stories in supporting the most vulnerable young people.

The glowing report follows a drive to share children's services with the neighbouring boroughs of Kensington and Chelsea and Westminster.

Sir Michael Wilshaw, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector for education, children's services and skills, was among several top names to reserve the highest praise for the programme.

"The tri-borough partnership has shown what can be achieved with strong political will and an ambition that only the best services will do for vulnerable children and young people," he said.

"These areas show what can be done. If they can do it, others must follow their lead."

Hammersmith and Fulham council's children's service provides essential support for young people who need help

TURN TO PAGE 3

Jeff's cancer challenge

FOOTBALL presenter Jeff Stelling was cheered on by Fulham and QPR fans last week as he completed a miraculous marathon challenge to raise money for cancer research. The 61-year-old racked up more than 250 miles as he passed 31 clubs on the way to walking 10 marathons in 10 days for the Prostate Cancer UK charity.

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Terror drones warning

SECURITY chiefs gathering in west London next week will be warned that the royal borough and the rest of the city is now at risk from terrorist drone attacks. Delegates at the Security and Counter Terror Expo at Olympia will hear that it is "only a matter of time before terrorists arm drones" to launch attacks, including use of chemical weapons.

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Heroes hit the wall

COMEDIAN Tommy Cooper, food writer Elizabeth David and playwright Samuel Beckett are among those whose achievements and time spent living in London will be celebrated with English Heritage Blue Plaques in this the scheme's 150th year, English Heritage have revealed.

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Focus on family life

FAMILY life has changed dramatically over the last 30 years, and London's families face new challenges and opportunities. City Hall's social policy team want to develop their understanding of the challenges facing families in London today, and how families in need can best be supported.

REPORT, PAGE 6

Bosses' wishlist

LONDON'S firms want the capital's next mayor to keep a relentless focus on business growth, to ensure the city remains an attractive hub for investment, creativity, skills and tourism – according to the CBI's London Manifesto aimed at the mayoral candidates.

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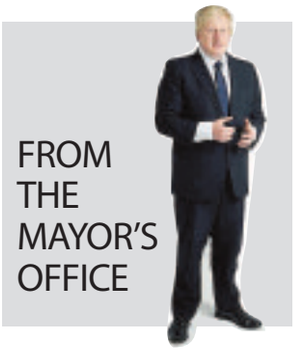
Schoolchildren to get a helping hand



THIS month will see the start of an innovative new scheme aimed at supporting vulnerable schoolchildren as they move from primary into secondary education.

The initiative,which is called Stepping Stones, is a schools-based programm which will involve older children as well as adults mentoring younger pupils as they begin life at secondary school.

Funded by the mayor, Stepping Stones will see Gladesmore Community School in Tottenham and youth-focused social action group Gangs Unite working with three secondary schools and their main feeder primary schools.

Gladesmore is an outstanding school with considerable experience of partnership working with schools across London – and Gangs Unite has a track record of working with disadvantaged and disaffected young people in both school-based and out of school settings.

Mayor of London Boris Johnson said: "Some pupils find the transition from primary to secondary school difficult, which can lead to a dip in attainment and also result in them experiencing ongoing education or behavioural problems. This can result in poor outcomes later on, affecting not just their confidence and self-esteem, but how well they do at GCSEs and their ability to get a job or into higher education.

"Stepping Stones is going to make a huge, positive difference to young Londoners at a critical period in their lives and I hope it will act as a template for other programmes for other children across the capital."

Stepping Stones is expected to benefit up to 200 London schoolchildren and will involve the training of year nine and 10 pupils, who will subsequently act as peer-mentors to younger children as they move from primary (year six) to secondary school (year seven).

A range of activities includes peer-to-peer and adult mentoring, summer activities, academic tutoring and skills and confidence building workshops.

Ray Lewis, senior advisor mentoring, said: "With this programme our aim to is set up structures that will support youngsters at what can be a very a tricky time. One of the key elements of the programme is the peer to peer mentoring, giving older children a degree of valuable responsibility, which will benefit them, but also create role models for the younger ones."

Commenting on the partnership between Gangs Unite and Gladesmore Community School, headteacher Tony Hartney said: "We are delighted to be working together to design and implement the Stepping Stones programme.

"We have found that adjusting to secondary school can be challenging for many pupils who don't have the skills to successfully cope with this crucial change. As a result, some young people encounter problems with learning and adopting an attitude that supports learning.

"Stepping Stones will utilise the immense power of peer mentoring, together with taught sessions designed to inspire pupils, with the aim of steering vulnerable pupils to have a positive engagement in their learning. We look forward to seeing a transformational impact on children's life chances."

The Stepping Stones programme begins this month and is due to finish at the end of the summer term in 2017. Outcomes and learnings from the programme will be used in the development of a toolkit, which will be made available to all primary and secondary schools in the capital, aimed at showing how to effectively support the transition from primary to secondary for vulnerable pupils.

■ The mayor supports a number of initiatives aimed at raising standards in teaching and attainment. This includes securing sites for 16 new schools, establishing the £24 million London Schools Excellence Fund, which has stimulated new partnerships and helped improve teachers' subject knowledge and expertise; setting up a schools unit to help groups wanting to set up free schools; the Gold Club scheme, which has celebrated over 240 exceptional schools in London with pupils from all backgrounds achieving academic success; and creating the London School Atlas, an interactive online map providing a uniquely detailed and comprehensive picture of London schools, current patterns of attendance and potential future demand for school places.

CLASS ACT: A new mentoring scheme will support vulnerable school children

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"Forget the theatrical event of the year, this is the theatrical event of the century"

Nicky Sweetland's verdict on Sunset Boulevard, Page 21

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A BLUE plaque is to mark the house in Chelsea where Samuel Beckett was staying in 1934 when his first full-length work, a collection of short stories called *More Pricks than Kicks*, was published

SEE PAGE 10

NEWS FROM SHEPHERD'S BUSH

■ **BACK IN BUSINESS: Hundreds of business leaders from across Hammersmith and Fulham came together for a town hall event to showcase the borough's best small firms. More than 50 traders ran promotional stalls at the Means Business event, with experts offering one-to-one advice to help aspiring entrepreneurs reach the top of their industry. The event, hosted by Hammersmith and Fulham council, was supported by the Your Business Community group. Nigel Pallace, the council's chief executive, said: 'Small local businesses are not just the lifeblood of the economy, they help define Hammersmith and Fulham's identity. We want to help them flourish.'**

Children's services 'outstanding'

FROM PAGE 1

and protection as well as looked-after children and care leavers.

Ofsted inspectors gave top marks to the council's adoption team and said the management of services was "outstanding".

Their report found that there had been significant improvements in helping children who leave care to find work and apprenticeships, while plans to boost support services for families were singled out for praise.

Several other successful programmes to tackle issues around the radicalisation of children and young people, female genital mutilation and forced marriage were also identified. Ofsted concluded that the "innovative" service had had a "very positive impact on improving outcomes for many of the most vulnerable young people in the borough, including those on the cusp of care."

Steve Miley, the council's director of family services, said he was delighted that the department had been rated among the best in the country.

"There is nothing more important among the work Hammersmith and Fulham council does than supporting and protecting children and young people. We are not resting on our laurels and are constantly looking for ways to improve our service even more. We will be looking to incorporate the Ofsted recommendations into this process."

Mike Sheridan, Ofsted's regional director for London, called for other councils to follow Hammersmith and Fulham's example.

"I am incredibly impressed with the quality of leadership and social work in the triborough," he said. "They have shown what is possible when talented leaders and professionals are ambitious for vulnerable young people and their families."

MP challenges market developer

LOCAL MP Andy Slaughter has challenged the firm behind the redevelopment of Shepherd's Bush Market to come back with new plans for the site that will allow traders to preserve its heritage.

Campaigners were celebrating last month after a compulsory purchase order imposed on the market by the former minister Eric Pickles was overturned in the Court of Appeal.

The ruling was hailed as a "beacon of hope" for traders, who say Orion's plan to build luxury flats could force long-standing traders to leave the market.

Mr Slaughter, MP for Hammersmith, said the ball was now "back in the developer's court".

"Will they sell up and move on? Will they come up with a more acceptable scheme that improves and preserves the market? Or will they try and bully the traders into submission?" he said.

Orion has said its regeneration plans for the area will create new homes and opportunities for start-up businesses, while "rejuvenating" the market.

But a public inquiry in 2014 found that there were insufficient safeguards for traders and a government inspector recommended rejecting the proposals.

A legal campaign led by the Shepherd's Bush Market Tenants' Association was triggered when this decision was overruled by Mr Pickles.

Mr Slaughter added: "This story has some way to run but for the moment we have a breathing space and can thank our most senior judges for standing up for the underdog."

Empire strikes back after closure – to the delight of music fans

BY JACK DIXON
jack@londonweeklynews.co.uk

THE wait will soon be over for music fans as one of London's most iconic venues prepares to open its doors once again.

Bosses at the Shepherd's Bush Empire have confirmed that the 112-year-old theatre will be rocking again in just a few weeks' time, following a four-month closure caused by damage to the roof.

Australian musician Troye Sivan will be the first act to perform on the venue's famous stage when it relaunches on April 19.

The Empire has been closed since December 4 last year when structural problems were discovered hours before a gig was due to start.

Manchester rock band The Courteeners were due to perform at the venue that night but the issues with the roof led to the sudden postponement.

Academy Music Group, which runs the Empire, posted on Twitter at the time that a "structural issue" in the building had forced the closure shortly before the band was due to take to the stage.

■ **SHOW MUST GO ON: The Shepherd's Bush Empire**

Dozens of concerts, including recent shows by The Coral and Newton Faulkner, had to be moved to alternative London venues, while others were postponed until later in the year.

But Academy Music Group says the show must – and will – go on.

A spokeswoman confirmed that essential maintenance work would be completed in time to reopen the venue for the Troye Sivan show on April 19.

She said public safety for customers had been a priority throughout and thanked fans for their patience while the repairs were carried out.

The announcement means ticket holders can expect to enjoy shows from bands including Wolfmother, The Lumineers and Ginger Baker's Air Force 3 over the next few weeks.

The iconic theatre hosts around 180 events and welcomes 250,000 music fans each year. It was built as a music hall in 1903 and became the BBC's Television Theatre in the 1950s.

A full list of concert dates is available on the venue's website – *www.academymusicgroup.com/o2shepherdsbushempire*

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NEWS FROM WESTMINSTER AND PIMLICO

■ **EASTER GIFTS: The Lord Mayor of Westminster City Council joined school children as they gave out Easter eggs at a local care home last week. The children, from years four and five at Our Lady of Delours Catholic School, visited the Forrester Court care home in Paddington, sang songs and had tea and cakes with the older residents before giving each of them a chocolate egg. Forrester Court provides residential, nursing and respite care for older people, including individuals who have Alzheimer's or other forms of dementia. Cllr Christabel Flight, Lord Mayor of Westminster and Older People's Champion, said: 'This Easter we are giving out 1,500 chocolate eggs to vulnerable people across Westminster as a gesture to highlight loneliness and isolation in the city. The children have been wonderful and it's terrific to see the reaction of the residents at Forrester Court. You can see how much it means to them to have a visit from such nice young people.' Leonardo from year four said: 'The older people have been really nice and fun to be around. It's been a great experience and I've had lots of fun.' Pictured are Leonardo, Xiana, Naomi, Sara, Zuriel and Yaaseen**

Homelessness – the impact on children's lives

Homelessness remains in the media spotlight, especially in light of the recent influx of refugees and asylum seekers. The individual needs of babies and young children, however, are largely overlooked in the broad scale of the overall problem.

In 2015, the BBC and the NSPCC published a report examining the scale and impact of homelessness on babies and their parents. They found that more than 15,000 nought-to-two-year-olds live in families classed as "statutorily homeless".

Babies living in homeless families can be extremely vulnerable and their development is reliant on the quality of the care their parents are able to provide. For parents who are homeless, providing this care can be extremely difficult, especially as many types of homeless accommodation lack the important safety, cleanliness and facilities babies need in order to thrive. This can have a severe adverse effect on that baby's mental health later on in their life.

According to another government report, one in ten children aged between 5 and 16 years have been adversely affected and many continue to have mental health problems into adulthood. Half of those with lifetime mental health problems first experience symptoms by the age of 14. The impact of homelessness early in a child's life is only likely to exacerbate this problem.

Under the present regime however, this situation is only likely to get worse, and its long term effects may not be fully appreciated until this generation of children reach the age of adulthood.

Hodge Jones and Allen is a leading North London law firm with an experienced social housing team. If you would like to discuss your situation, contact Siddiq directly on 020 7874 8421 or email sfazaluddin@hja.net. Hodge Jones & Allen, 180 North Gower Street, London, NW1 2NB. www.hja.net

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College joins in EU debate

WITH the EU referendum just a couple of months away, DLD College London students welcomed guest speaker David Buik MBE to give a lecture on Brexit.

The inaugural visit launched the new lecture series programme which will see influential individuals visit the Westminster Bridge-based college to educate staff, students and the general public in a variety of subjects.

Mr Buik, who is a respected market commentator with the city firm of Panmure Gordon, holds clear and passionate beliefs regarding opportunities for British business outside the framework of the EU.

In addition to the DLD cohort, parents, guardians, surrounding business professionals and other academic institutions turned out to hear his view.

He gave an in depth presentation about the substantive issues surrounding Britain leaving the EU and answered all questions put to him in a fair and clear manner.

The lecture itself highlighted some myths regarding the negative trade impact of Brexit while, at the same time, rejecting the arguments often cited in the mass media such as uncontrollable immigration. He opined that sovereignty was an undervalued asset and that the arguments for remaining in the EU reflected political interests and those of big business.

Mr Buik also concisely summarised and acknowledged the validity of some pro-EU arguments including the additional influence that membership gives to the UK in tackling issues such as global warming.

The DLD Economics students were also given the opportunity to spend half hour with Mr Buik to gain further insight when they welcomed him on arrival. The evening culminated in a vote of thanks that was delivered by current AS students Sam Ranabhat and Jasmine Elkhadraoui and Mr Buik was presented with an engraved silver salver.

Principal at DLD, Rachel Borland, said: "The event was an illustration not only of the genuine interest among DLD College students in this particular issue but their willingness to explore current affairs in general.

"Opinions were voiced by several participants both verbally and in the form of a vote which demonstrated a dichotomy of views on this complex issue. The audience demonstrated an acute knowledge of the political, sociological and economic arguments on both sides of the debate. They posed their questions courteously and they were answered in depth."

This public lecture was the first in a series planned by DLD's faculty heads and more exciting talks across the curriculum, including Science and Creative Arts have been planned for the coming months.

■ Founded in 1931, DLD College London is one of the oldest and most prestigious colleges in the UK.

In September 2015 it relocated to brand new, purpose-built premises in the heart of London, on 199 Westminster Bridge Road.

Writing for you every week, London's most outspoken entrepreneur

Charlie pipes up!

Living wage is a step forward

IF you run a business where you can't afford to pay a proper wage then you're not running a proper business. This is something I genuinely believe and why I think the National Living Wage is a great step forward for the UK economy.

The new £7.20-an-hour wage came into force last week for workers over the age of 25, which is a 50p-an-hour increase on the National Minimum Wage of £6.70 per hour, which workers aged 21-24 are entitled to receive.

When business owners complain about this sort of minimum wage legislation they tend to couch their concerns in terms of the numbers of jobs that will be lost. But, what they really mean is that their profits are going to be squeezed, or that they are about to be found out, and that forcing them to pay decent money will collapse their financial model.

In the latter case they have been making a loss, and the only reason they have managed to keep their accounts in the black is because they've been paying workers under the odds. Be under no illusion, these types of businesses stay solvent on the misery of their workers.

Be you a business owner or an employee, the primary reason for going to work is to be able to earn enough money to live a reasonably comfortable life. And if a company is only able to stay afloat by paying less than this amount, then it shouldn't be in business, because such an operation is being subsidised by its workforce, who are effectively being paid for less than 100 per cent of their labour.

You could argue such workers are part-time slaves.

In almost all cases loss-making companies should be allowed to go out of business. That's the Darwinism of the capitalist system under which we operate, and the way we believe our economy best allocates resources.

A company robbing its workforce of 20 per cent of their money, just to stay afloat, is no more efficient than one paying proper wages, but which is unable to make its product at a competitive price.

They are both the same, and yet only the ethical one is going broke as far as the accountants are concerned.

So I believe the National Living Wage is a wonderful innovation that will force people to run proper businesses, by not exploiting workers.

And if that means some companies must close then we're most likely all better off in the long run.

Probably, in truth, what it means in many cases is that those getting rich from their workers' labour, as a result of not paying decent money, will just have to share a bit more of it with their lower paid workers.

Will lots of businesses go broke as a result? I don't think so!

■ **PLAY FAIR, PAY FAIR: Charlie Mullins argues in favour of the new National Living Wage**

Views expressed are those of the author and not necessarily those of this newspaper

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Chilling warning against terror drones

BY GEOFF BAKER
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SECURITY chiefs gathering in Kensington next week will be warned that the royal borough and the rest of the city is now at risk from terrorist drone attacks.

Delegates at the Security and Counter Terror Expo at Olympia on April 19 to 20 will hear that it is "only a matter of time before terrorists arm drones" to launch attacks, including use of chemical weapons, at targets with large crowds, such as Chelsea FC's Stamford Bridge ground, the Notting Hill Carnival, Heathrow Airport and Olympia itself.

One security expert is warning that drones could be used to "inflict the highest level of terrorism".

The warnings have a special significance for Kensington and Chelsea, which the borough council has revealed has been "identified by the Home Office and security services as a 'priority area' in relation to counter terrorism, with large numbers of 'subjects of interest' as well as communities considered to be particularly vulnerable to radicalisation".

Experts say that new drones are easily affordable and can be remotely-controlled from smartphones.

"If armed, and so turned into an improvised explosive device, drones could cause significant damage," the security conference will be warned by Steve Maton, of the Information Systems Security Association UK, who says that drones of all types – Unmanned Aerial Vehicles [UAVs], Unmanned Ground Vehicles [UGVs] and even underwater Unmanned Marine Vehicles [UMVs] – are now available to ISIS terrorists.

"ISIS have been using kit devices for a while for creating their high quality propaganda videos and performing battlefield reconnaissance. It is only going to be time before terrorists arm larger drones as IEDs and with possible jam-proof communications," Mr Maton warns.

He adds: "Civilian UAVs can be operated at distances of over two miles using radio waves and first-person view (FPV) or GPS navigation. Some inexpensive drones can carry payloads in excess of 3kg – some even up to 7kg. If armed, and so turned into an Improvised Explosive Device, drones could cause significant damage.

"UAVs are allowed to fly up to an altitude of 400 feet. However, this is only based on CAA regulations and clearly ignored by any terrorist. Many domestic drones can fly to an altitude of over 1,000 metres. With a price tag of £200 to £1,000, they are also within most individuals' price range.

"Most UAVs can now be controlled using FPV and smartphones connected to the controller, allowing the user, if required, to blend in with the crowd and so hiding their actions. All

these reduce the probability of the user being identified and caught, so allowing them to escape or perform parallel attacks."

Chillingly, he added: "Such devices would be hard to penetrate military compounds. However, they could be used for targeting civilians. Imagine modifying a commercial drone crop-duster into a chemical weapon.

"Imagine the result of flying multiple UAVs into a large, crowd at an open-air show. UAVs can be highly manoeuvrable. Once a crowd understands their intentions, through multiple low-level detonations, remaining UAVs could then be used as a visual object, much easier than unseen ground forces and shots.

"Imagine these drones offering high speed manoeuvrability, controlled hovering and, once capable of handling the recoil, installed with a gun. Fleeing crowds could be directed to additional danger, such as planted ground explosives. This shows ways of using new technology to perform old and familiar terrorist herding tactics."

Mr Maton warned that office buildings – such as Kensington and Chelsea Town Hall and City Hall – are also at risk of attack by terror drones, as are planes at Heathrow.

"UAVs have the capability to bypass ground level protection. Such protection has been analysed and deployed by skilled security consultants who understand today's security weaknesses – not air attacks from drones," writes Mr Maton in a paper prepared for the Olympia exhibition, which will be attended by security experts from all over the world.

"As such, concrete perimeter defences are installed, CCTV with restricted vertical adjustment, alarms installed based on infiltration from the ground, fences are erected, lights are focused on entrances and darkened areas on the ground. Guards and dogs are another form of ground protection that will have very little impact.

"Once at the target a UAV has the capability to hover and deploy its payload or even have a limited capability to chase a target down; even possibly entering a building. A building's construction wouldn't necessarily restrict entry as a loss of signal could initiate a destruct instruction, possibly causing more damage within a confined place.

"A USV [Unmanned Space Vehicle] has the capabilities to hover outside a weak location, such as targeted office windows. How quickly could a meeting room be evacuated once a drone is seen outside?

"Power stations could be infiltrated as a USV can hover over ground defences and be directed to vulnerable machinery. What effect would an explosion cause to a full plane fuel tanker? Imagine a USV infiltrating air space, be this military or domestic. An aircraft wouldn't have the capability to react to one or even numerous drones that move quickly into its landing flightpath. They may initially not even see such as small object."

Even Thames-side buildings – such as the House of Commons – are not secure against drones that can now travel underwater, cautions Mr Maton.

"UMVs can navigate seas and rivers targeting pipes, boats and sensitive structures; submersible devices can be used to target areas below the water's surface and are harder to visually detect.

"Any drone can be used as a weapon that can be purchased and assembled cheaply with no suspicion; through widespread domestic or professional sites. It is light-weight, easy to transport and relatively easy to hide and deploy. Some drones come with simulation software allowing for self-learning; so preventing the need to involve external trainers. With recent advances, multi-rotor UAVs are now straightforward to fly and can be flown at significant distances so preventing the controller having to be directly at the scene."

But Mr Maton claims that security services are preparing for the threat of a drone attack on the capital.

"Security organisations are aware of the drones' capability and are reviewing protection through such devices as nets, detectors and jammers," he stated.

■ WE'RE HAVING A PARTY: Are you a performer or a producer, an artist or a poet? Is there a creative project you'd like to unveil to the community? Would you like to run a stall to sell your homemade arts and crafts or raise money for your favourite cause? Now's the time to get involved with this year's SouthWestFest, which offers a great opportunity for Westminster individuals, community groups, charities and businesses to promote their work to thousands of people. SouthWestFest is a charity run by volunteers and relies on the generous donations of local people, organisations and businesses. It is reckoned to be SW1's biggest community festival. Every year in June it brings together more than 10,000 people, with the aim of celebrating and enriching life in south Westminster through creativity. Our picture shows the full ensemble of Passport to Pimlico, led by Martin Johnston, which was performed as one of the highlights of 2013's South West Fest. To register your interest you can email *director@southwestfest.org.uk*

City Hall turns focus on childcare as families feel pressure of life in capital

BY LWN REPORTER
editorial@londonweeklynews.co.uk

THERE are more than a million families with children living in London – but it is feared many don't have the support they need to thrive and make the most of the opportunities the capital has to offer them.

A range of support is available to disadvantaged families to help them make ends meet, including:

■ Healthy Start food vouchers
■ 15 hours a week funded nursery places for two year olds from disadvantaged families
■ 15 hours a week of free childcare in term time for three and four year olds
■ Free school meals
■ Local Assistance Fund to help with unexpected or one-off expenditures

But many families who are entitled to this support do not take it up.

Family life has changed dramatically over the last 30 years, and London's families face new challenges and opportunities.

City Hall's social policy team say they want to develop their understanding of the challenges facing families in London today, and how families in need can best be supported.

Now, the Institute for Public Policy Research, a progressive think tank, and the Greater London Authority have launched a joint project on the future of childcare in the capital.

They are asking: if you're a parent or grandparent, what is your experience of childcare in London? Is there enough affordable, good quality childcare in your area? What do you think prevents families from accessing the support that is available?

One respondent to the survey, Ella Rees, said: "We are lucky, and 'disadvantaged' is a relative term, but when it comes to the work, childcare and housing balance our family is at enough of a disadvantage to make us want to leave London.

"My husband works for the police, and I work for a theatre – both things London claims to want to have. So the problems are:

■ 1 – by the ridiculous housing market (we rent at £1,000 per month with no hope of saving or getting a mortgage;
■ 2 – by not having local grandparents to give us free childcare;
■ 3 – inflexible childcare – we have to stick to and pay for the same nursery days for my two year old regardless of my husband's changing shift pattern and availability to look after her himself, which could save us money. As it is half my salary is taken up paying for two days' nursery and we scramble to cover the other day we need thanks to my flexible employer.

"Flexible employers are key to making childcare work, and should be applauded. I feel very fortunate to have had maternity leave/pay and now flexible working. We wouldn't be in London at all by now if it weren't for that.

"As it is, we would struggle less if the nursery would at least let us vary the days. We'd happily give months of notice. Further subsidy from a younger age would help, or at least nurseries run by not-for-profit organisations to reduce the daily cost.

"The other problem is the lack of local schools, or nurseries close to schools – we also have a five year old who did not get into any of our nearby schools, so the logistics of dropping them both off and then getting to work are totally inefficient and are alone enough of a reason to make us leave London if we could find jobs elsewhere.

"We're actively seeking employment elsewhere in the UK, so we can escape this mess of overpriced housing and inadequate school places that has been allowed to develop."

To share your views on this initiative, you can visit the dedicated website *talklondon.london.gov.uk*

Car fines a golden blunder

THE owner of a fleet of gold supercars has been landed with hundreds of pounds in parking fines.

A gold Lamborghini Aventador, Rolls Royce, Mercedes G63 6x6 and Bentley Flying Spur caused a stir even in the swanky Knightsbridge area they were parked in, with dozens of people stopping to take photographs of the ostentatious-looking vehicles on their mobile phones.

The Lamborghini had two separate penalty notices for Tuesday and Wednesday slipped under its wiper blade, while the Mercedes and Bentley each had one.

The fines of £80 each time, which can be reduced to £40 if they are paid within 14 days, mean that the owner, who is reportedly from Saudi Arabia, owes the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea as much as £320.

The vehicles could even be removed and fines increased if the charges go unpaid.

The cars were parked in Cadogan Place, outside the Jumeirah Carlton Tower Hotel, in Knightsbridge – just yards away from an NCP car park.

Costing £50 for 24 hours, the car park housed non-gold Bentleys, Audis and a Ferrari last Wednesday.

■ GOLDEN WONDER: A Lamborghini Aventador

Landlord's gas safety offence

LONDON landlord Duran Akbulut has been handed an eight-week suspended prison sentence for gas safety failings.

Westminster Magistrates' Court heard how Akbulut failed to have a gas boiler checked for safety by a suitably qualified engineer and to obtain the necessary safety certificate from the Gas Safe Register.

The boiler was in a property that was being let out to a tenant who raised concerns about a carbon monoxide leak and the National Grid switched off the gas supply. The tenant made a complaint to the Health and Safety Executive.

Akbulut, of Kingshill Avenue, Kenton, north west London, pleaded guilty to breaching Regulation 36(3) of the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998 and was given an eight-week prison sentence, suspended for 12 months, was ordered to pay £80 victim surcharge and contribute £300 in costs to HSE.

HSE inspector, Neil Fry said: "It is the duty of landlords to ensure gas safety checks are carried out to protect tenants from the fatal risk of carbon monoxide poisoning."

Craft week's second year

LAST year the first London Craft Week launched, with 70 events, 20,000 visits and a wide cast including the Prince of Wales, Grayson Perry and 350 makers.

From May 3 to 7 the second edition will showcase exceptional craftsmanship from around the world through a journey-of-discovery programme of 129 events across the city, featuring hidden workshops and unknown makers alongside celebrated masters, famous studios, galleries, shops and luxury brands.

The aim is to experience the magic of true creativity, see what real quality means, meet some of the world's most respected makers and artists and even have a try.

Craft Week chairman Guy Saltewr said: "London has long had a fashion week and a design festival. Now there is London Craft Week, a celebration of the magical combination of imagination, individuality, passion and skill found in the best-made of things."

Tube death court ruling

THE family of Jean Charles de Menezes have lost a human rights challenge over the decision not to charge any individual police officer over his death.

Relatives of the Brazilian took their case to the European Court of Human Rights last year – almost a decade after he was mistaken for a suicide bomber and shot dead by police marksmen on a Tube train at Stockwell Underground station in south London on July 22 2005 – a fortnight after the July 7 terror attacks.

Last Wednesday the Strasbourg court's Grand Chamber found that UK authorities had not failed in their obligations to conduct an effective investigation into the incident.

■ ROYAL APPOINTMENT: The Queen presents University of West London student Jennifer Santer with this year's Gold Service Scholarship award

Queen salutes gold scholar Jennifer

UNIVERSITY of West London student Jennifer Santner has received the Gold Service Scholarship award 2016.

The prestigious accolade was presented to Jennifer by The Queen, a patron of the award, at a ceremony held at Claridge's last month.

The Gold Service Scholarship is an annual competition for young, front-of-house professionals. Jennifer competed against seven other national finalists in a challenge that consisted of planning, preparing and serving a three-course lunch to a table of four industry experts.

Jennifer will receive a year of mentoring from Diego Masciaga at The Waterside Inn and Silvano Giraldin, Director of Le Gavroche. She will also work with the Royal Household, visit the Mandarin Oriental Hotel Group in Europe, attend the Mondriaan Hotel School in the Netherlands and visit the vineyards of Champagne.

She said: "It has been a very exciting start to 2016. Meeting the Queen was a unique experience. I am very happy and proud to be this year's Gold Scholar and am very much looking forward to this year and all the mentoring and experiences to come."

Jennifer is the restaurant manager at the Fenchurch Restaurant at London's Sky Garden. She has completed a foundation degree hospitality management course at the London College of Hospitality and Tourism.

Course leader Ariane Lengyel said: "Jennifer was an excellent student who always showed dedication to her studies at UWL. I am sure she will continue to shine as a star in the exciting world of hospitality."

Businesses issue growth manifesto to the next mayor

BY LWN REPORTER
editorial@londonweeklynews.co.uk

LONDON'S firms want the capital's next mayor to keep a relentless focus on business growth and ensure the city remains an attractive hub for new investment, creativity, skills and tourism.

That's the message delivered by the CBI's London Manifesto aimed at mayoral candidates.

A London Prosperity Agenda sets out the UK's largest business group's priorities for the new mayor on housing and transport infrastructure, the planning system, digital and technology skills, trade, tourism and financial services. Key action points include:

■ A new housing strategy within 100 days of taking office, which commits to building 50,000 homes a year

■ Press the Government to deliver the Airports Commission's recommendation to build a new runway in the South East, and deliver Transport for London's business plan, including Crossrail 2

■ Continue to implement the existing 2050 London Infrastructure Plan, and give a stronger voice to businesses on the London Enterprise Partnership

■ Develop London's 'Knowledge Quarter', and support London's Digital Talent Taskforce to help address future digital skills needs

■ Provide certainty and consistency in UK tax policy to attract financial firms, and call for the Chancellor of the Exchequer to end the Bank Corporation Tax Surcharge by the end of the Parliament, once the Budget is balanced.

Lucy Haynes, CBI London director, said: "London's star has continued to rise over the past few years. From setting a new standard for hosting the Olympic Games to the emergence of Tech City, the capital has shown the world it is still the best place to grow, do business and thrive.

■ ACTION CALL: Lucy Haynes, CBI London director

"But in an increasingly competitive global race, the next mayor must take some tough decisions from day one for London to continue to grow and prosper, and to keep the city a magnet for investment and skills.

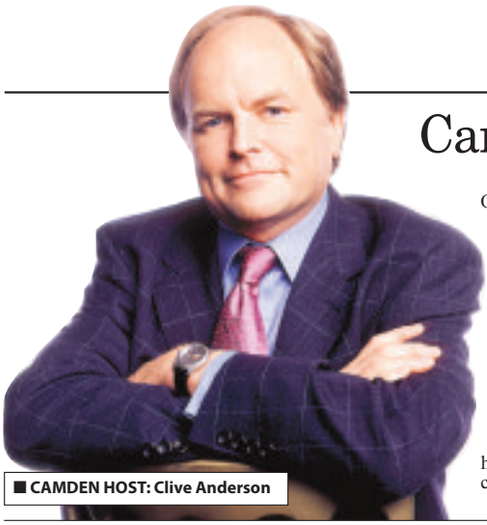
"From building the 50,000 homes a year the capital needs to house its talented workers, and a new runway that will boost our exports to high growth markets, to making the city a global beacon for digital and technological skills, London's next leader has a unique opportunity to plan ahead, and position the city at the head of the pack."

The CBI co-hosted a business hustings with the Institute of Directors, London Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Federation of Small Businesses and London First for the four main mayoral candidates – Zac Goldsmith MP (Conservative), Sadiq Khan MP (Labour), Caroline Pidgeon MBE (Liberal Democrat) and Dee Searle representing Siân Berry (Green) – at KPMG's headquarters in Canada Square last month. The event was a prime opportunity to brief the mayoral hopefuls on what London's business community hopes and expects of them.

The City is the world's most international financial centre, and London makes up over half of all the UK's services exports. But the gap is narrowing between the capital's unique position, Hong Kong and Singapore.

Businesses want the next mayor to act as an advocate to ensure the conditions are right for London to continue to be a global financial and professional services hub.

Camden has a good chortle



■ CAMDEN HOST: Clive Anderson

ONE of the biggest nights in the comedy calendar was enjoyed by a smattering of celebrities and fans last week when the annual Chortle Awards were held at the Jongleurs club in Camden.

One of the UK's most influential comedy critic and review sites, *Chortle.co.uk* hosts the annual get together where some of the biggest names in comedy and stand-up let their hair down for the evening and celebrate the very best of the nation's mirth making prowess.

Clive Anderson was this year's master of ceremonies and he was joined by *I'm a Celebrity Get Me Out of Here* winner Vicki Pattison, former S Club 7 singer Hannah Spearitt, comedian Omid Djalili and broadcaster Vanessa Felz, who presented the coveted accolades.

The big winners on the night included Peter Kay, who claimed the TV award for *Car Share*, Radio Four's *Just a Minute,* which scooped the Radio Award and Joseph Morpurgo, who won a hat-trick with the Comedian's Comedian, Best Newcomer and Breakthrough Act gongs.

Pippa Evans picked up the award for best music and variety and then went on to gather another accolade with her co-stars when the improvised musical *Showstoppers* won the best character, improv, or sketch act category.

The glittering event finished with a bang when veteran entertainers Vic Reeves and Bob Mortimer were given the award for outstanding contribution to comedy.

If you would like to see a full list of nominees and winners, you can visit the website *chortle.co.uk*

■ WELL PRESENTED: Former S Club 7 singer Hannah Spearitt

Where To Find Your Local Favourite Free Newspaper

Westminster & Pimlico NEWS — pick up points

Sainsbury's Store	Melbourne Avenue	West Ealing	W13 9BZ
Tesco Metro	94 Church Street	Paddington	NW8 8EX
Tesco Classic Metro	17-25 Regent Street	London	SW1Y 4LR
Sainsbury's Store	38 Stratton Street	Mayfair	W1J 8LT
Sainsbury's Store	15-17 Tottenham Court Road	Central London	W1T 1BJ
Co-op	504-506 Harrow Road	Paddington	W9 3QA
Tesco Classic Metro	22-25 Bedford Street	London	WC2E 9EQ
Co-op	Golden Cross House	London	WC2R 0RG
Notting Hill Gate Library	1 Pembridge Square	Notting Hill	W2 4EW
Kensal Library	20 Golborne Road		W10 5PF
Coach & Horses Pub	23 Greek Street	Soho	W1D 5DH
Pimlico Library	Lupus Street	Pimlico	SW1V 3EY

Kensington & Chelsea NEWS — pick up points

Kensington Central Library	Phillimore Walk	Kensington	W8 7RX
North Kensington Library	108 Ladbroke Grove	Kensington	W11 1PZ
Brompton Library	210 Old Brompton Road	London	SW5 0BS
The Tabernacle, Notting Hill	35 Powis Square	Notting Hill	W11 2AY
Chelsea Library	Chelsea Old Town Hall	Chelsea	SW3 5EZ
Chelsea Sports Centre	Chelsea Manor Street	Chelsea	SW3 5PL
Avonmore Lib. & Neighbourhood Ctr	North End Crescent		W14 8TG

Fulham Chronicle — pick up points

Fulham Library	598 Fulham Road		SW6 5NX

Hammersmith CHRONICLE — pick up points

The Grove Neighbourhood Centre	7 Bradmore Park Road	Hammersmith	W6 0DT
Hammersmith Library	Shepherd's Bush Road		W6 7AT

Shepherd's Bush CHRONICLE — pick up points

Westfield Library	6 Wood Lane	W12 7BF
Askew Road Library	87-91 Askew Road	W12 9AS

Firm fined after two die in crane collapse

BY LWN REPORTER
editorial@londonweeklynews.co.uk

A CRANE hire company has been fined heavily for failings that led to the death of two men as a crane collapsed in London.

Southwark Crown Court heard that crane operator Jonathan Cloke, 37, died after falling from the crane as it collapsed. It fell onto Michael Alexa, 23, a member of the public, who was also killed.

The court heard how sections of the tower crane, which was on a housing development in Thessaly Road, Battersea, separated when 24 bolts failed due to metal fatigue.

The bolts were a significant safety feature on the crane's slew ring, which connected the mast, or tower, to the slew turret. This allows the arms of the crane jib to rotate through 360 degrees. When the bolts failed the slew turret and jib separated from the mast and fell to the ground.

The Health and Safety Executive investigation into the incident, in September 2006, found that Falcon Crane Hire Ltd did not investigate a similar incident which happened nine weeks before, when the bolts failed on the same crane and had to be replaced.

HSE found that the company had an inadequate system to manage the inspection and maintenance of their fleet of cranes.

Their process to investigate the underlying cause of the components' failings was also considered to be inadequate. It told the court the particular bolts were a safety-critical part of the crane. The court also heard the bolts failing previously was an exceptional and significant occurrence, which should have been recognised by Falcon Crane Hire.

Lilliana Alexa, Mr Alexa's mother, said on behalf of her family: "Michael was a lovely son, a wonderful big brother and a devoted father. His son has had to grow up without the love and support of Michael, who adored him. He was denied that opportunity because his life was taken away and with his, ours too.

"The memories of that day will never leave our family. We heard the crash and felt the ground shake. I found Michael and it's an image that haunts my nightmares.

"If only we had stopped to chat or parked the car somewhere else he would still be alive. We know we are not to blame but it does not stop us all feeling guilt.

"We cannot comprehend how our beloved son, brother, father and friend who was so full of live has gone.

"The whole crane industry must learn from our tragedy and the devastation it has caused. We do not want another family to endure the same pain of losing their child."

Mike Wilcock, HSE head of operations, said: "Jonathan and Michael's deaths were tragic, needless and entirely avoidable. These two men need not have died had Falcon Crane Hire taken the right, decisive action when the bolts failed the first time. The company fell far short of its health and safety obligation."

Falcon Crane Hire Ltd were fined £750,000 and ordered to pay costs of £100,000 for breaching Sections 2 and 3 of the Health and Safety at Work Act.

Multi-cultural champions

FOOTBALL FOR UNITY

BY GEOFF BAKER
geoff@londonweeklynews.co.uk

Kensington & Chelsea NEWS
PICK UP A FREE COPY
Football's campaign to counter extremism takes off worldwide
THE paper serving the HEART of London

■ WORLD GOAL: How the Football For Unity initiative has been reported in London Weekly News titles

YOUNG and poor west London footballers who could only kick about in the back streets a year ago are proudly celebrating becoming league champions this week – winning a major title with three games in hand.

The under-16s boys team of Kensington-based TUFF FC, the movement formed to protect young people at risk of joining gangs by turning them to football instead, has won the London FA Saturday Youth League.

A year ago the players did not even have a team, let alone kit or a pitch to play on. But after they turned for help to The Unity of Faiths Foundation's founders Dr Shamender Talwar and Ms Anna Prior, they were found a training ground in Southall and given the chance to practise three times a week, and join the league.

And now they are the champions of London – and next month they will travel to Belgium to meet EU leaders and play a key Football For Unity match against a local side from Molenbeek.

European leaders are organising the game as a high-profile demonstration of what football can achieve in turning vulnerable young people away from crime.

The under-16s side is made up of players from north Kensington, Southall, Camden, Hayes and Hanwell.

"The under-16s and everybody at TUFF FC is overjoyed that they are the champions," said Dr Talwar, whose foundation now runs several boys' teams and girls' teams throughout west London.

"What an outcome! We took these kids from the clutches of poverty and the risk of gang culture and turned them around.

"They have become hugely-talented footballers and proud citizens of Britain – and they have gone on to become not only champions of London but champions of unity.

■ WINNING TEAM: Delighted members of TUFF FC, along with founders Dr Shamender Talwar and Anna Prior, inset above, celebrate after winning the London FA Saturday Youth League

"Anna and I are enormously proud of them. These kids have never experienced anything like this before; they are overwhelmed."

Dr Talwar added: "A few of them were in tears after the final game – which they won 5-1 – because they couldn't believe they'd done it, against all the odds.

"This is a real-life David and Goliath story because some people thought these kids would have no chance in a league that is no Micky Mouse one.

"But they battled the whole season, they put in incredible efforts week in, week out.

"They played 25 games and won with three games in hand. It's a fantastic success, it's a victory for multi-cultural London."

Next month the Under-16s and other TUFF FC teams will go to Molenbeek with London MEP Syed Kamall, who will also be introducing the team and organisers to EU leaders with the aim of establishing similar football schemes in other countries across Europe.

Police investigate moped collision

POLICE are appealing for witnesses to a hit-and-run incident in west London in which an elderly man was badly hurt.

Detectives say the collision happened at around 4.50pm on Wednesday, March 30 on the Uxbridge Road near the junction with Devonport Road.

The 88-year-old man was crossing the road when he was struck by a cream coloured Piaggio moped.

The force of the impact threw the pensioner across the road, police say. They said the bike's rider fell off his machine but then remounted the vehicle and made off towards Loftus Road prior to the arrival of the emergency services.

The elderly man suffered serious head injuries in the collision and was taken by ambulance to a central London hospital. He was in a critical condition. Next of kin have been informed.

A 16-year-old teenager was arrested on March 31 on suspicion of failing to stop after an accident and was being held in custody at a west London police station.

A moped was recovered within one mile of the scene of the collision. Officers from the Met's Serious Collision Investigation Unit are appealing for any witnesses to the collision, or anyone who has information that may assist police, to get in touch.

Anyone with information should contact detectives at the Serious Collision Investigation Unit at Alperton Traffic Garage on 0208 991 9555 or phone CrimeStoppers on 0800 555 111 if you do not want to give your name.

Remember stars who were our neighbours

BY LWN REPORTER
editorial@londonweeklynews.co.uk

COMEDIAN Tommy Cooper, food writer Elizabeth David and playwright Samuel Beckett are among those whose achievements and time spent living in London will be celebrated with English Heritage blue plaques in this the scheme's 150th year, English Heritage have revealed.

The anniversary of the London blue plaques scheme will also be marked with a weekend of special walking tours on May 7 and 8, a series of talks, a new book and a blue plaques app.

Professor Ronald Hutton, Chair of the English Heritage Blue Plaques Panel, said: "Since 1866, these modest but distinctive blue roundels have reminded us of the people and places that made history.

"This year we will celebrate stars of the silver screen and stage, a much loved comedian, sporting legends and one of the greatest writers of modern times. It's a roll-call that underlines the wide range of talent who over the centuries have made London their home."

Blue plaques will be unveiled in 2016 to, among others:

■ **Samuel Beckett** *(1906-1989):* The Irish Nobel Prize-winning playwright and author lived in London for three years in the mid-1930s during which time he was seeking literary work, and attending psychoanalysis at the Tavistock Clinic. The plaque will mark the house in Chelsea where Beckett was staying in 1934 when his first full-length work, a collection of interlinked short stories called *More Pricks than Kicks*, was published, and his lodging and living experiences of London were beginning to form his ideas for his first novel, *Murphy* (1938).

■ **Tommy Cooper** *(1921-1984):* Famous for his comedy act as a hapless and incompetent magician, the fez-wearing Cooper with his catchphrase "Just Like That!" was a much-loved household name. "I'm glad to be in the show," he said at the Royal Variety Performance in 1964, "I couldn't afford to be in the audience." The new plaque will be installed at his former home in Chiswick, where he lived with his wife and two children from 1955 until his death in 1984.

■ **Laurie Cunningham** *(1956-1989):* One of the first black footballers to play for the England team and the first to appear for England in a competitive international match (against Wales in 1979), Cunningham was a pioneer of black achievement in the sport. The north Londoner also played for West Bromwich Albion and was the first British player to transfer to Real Madrid.

■ **Elizabeth David** *(1913-1992):* The finest English cookery writer of the 20th century, Elizabeth David was instrumental in introducing post-war England to Mediterranean food. She is the first cookery writer to be commemorated with a blue plaque.

■ **Margot Fonteyn** *(1919-1991):* The greatest dancer of her generation, Margot Fonteyn combined a musicality, purity of line, and an acting ability to sensational effect. Her performances awakened a love of dance in thousands of people around the world. Her plaque will be installed outside her former flat in Covent Garden where she lived during some of some of her career-defining roles as Prima Ballerina of Sadler's Wells Ballet, including *Cinderella* (1948) and *Sylvia* (1952).

■ **Ava Gardner** *(1922-1990)*: One of the iconic movie stars of the 20th century and often called the most beautiful woman in the world. Gardner appeared in over 60 films. In addition, her tempestuous affairs and three high-profile marriages – to Mickey Rooney, Artie Shaw and Frank Sinatra – made her one of the most talked about celebrities of her day.

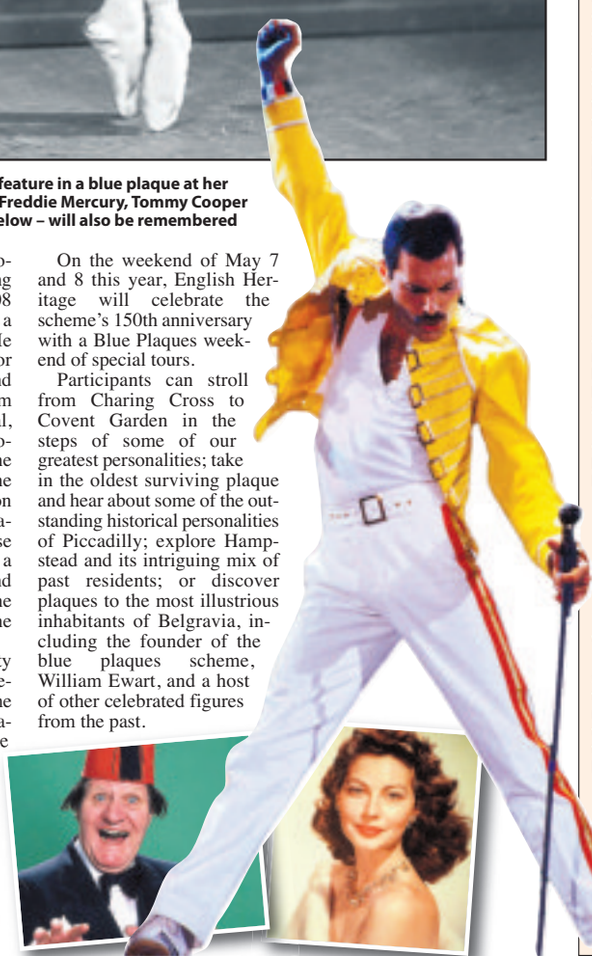
■ **Freddie Mercury** *(1946-1991):* Charismatic and flamboyant frontman of the legendary rock band, Queen, Freddie Mercury was an extremely gifted performer, composer and music producer. In the mid-1980s he began a solo career in tandem with Queen and worked with some of the biggest names in the music industry, from David Bowie to Michael Jackson. Born Farrokh Bulsara on the island of Zanzibar in 1946, Mercury's plaque will adorn the house in Feltham where he moved with his family in 1964.

■ **Bobby Moore** *(1941-1993):* Professional footballer Bobby Moore was captain of the team that took England to victory 50 years ago this July in the 1966 World Cup, a triumph that propelled him to instant and lasting fame. Moore's total of 108 England appearances stood as a record for many years. He made his first team debut for West Ham United in 1958 and in 1964 he skippered the team to victory in the FA Cup final, repeating the feat in the European Cup Winners' Cup the next season. This will be the first blue plaque in the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham, marking the house where Moore developed into a footballer of great ability, and where he still lived when he wore the England shirt for the first time in 1962.

In 1866 the (Royal) Society of Arts founded what would become the blue plaques scheme "to increase the public estimation for places which have been the abodes of men who have made England what it is." On May 7 that year, the precursor to today's expert Blue Plaques Panel met for the first time; among the first people considered for a memorial plaque were Benjamin Franklin, David Garrick and Lord Nelson.

On the weekend of May 7 and 8 this year, English Heritage will celebrate the scheme's 150th anniversary with a Blue Plaques weekend of special tours.

Participants can stroll from Charing Cross to Covent Garden in the steps of some of our greatest personalities; take in the oldest surviving plaque and hear about some of the outstanding historical personalities of Piccadilly; explore Hampstead and its intriguing mix of past residents; or discover plaques to the most illustrious inhabitants of Belgravia, including the founder of the blue plaques scheme, William Ewart, and a host of other celebrated figures from the past.



■ **ICON: Margot Fonteyn is to feature in a blue plaque at her former flat in Covent Garden. Freddie Mercury, Tommy Cooper and Ava Gardner – pictured below – will also be remembered**

Grants will survive cuts to budgets

VITAL cash for dozens of important community projects and services will continue until 2021 after the future of London Councils' Grants programme was confirmed for a further four years.

Despite the difficult financial situation facing local government, the programme will continue to commission service outcomes to combat homelessness, tackle sexual and domestic violence, and to address poverty through employment across London.

Borough leaders agreed to fund the grants programme after the end of the current four-year funding cycle in March 2017.

Cllr Paul McGlone, chair of London Councils' grants committee, said: "I am pleased leaders have confirmed that London Councils will continue to commission projects to address some of the most complex and difficult challenges faced by vulnerable people across the capital.

"Many Londoners face hardship that leads to homelessness, the scourge of domestic violence in the home or long-term unemployment, especially those from minority communities. The third-sector organisations we commission to address these issues, working alongside local councils, can turn lives around for the better. We look forward to seeing the continued positive results this third sector-led programme delivers."

Following a consultation, leaders also agreed to work closely with the City of London's charity (the City Bridge Trust) on a further funding priority – capacity-building in the voluntary sector – with a view to that organisation taking over the support of this area, alongside similar existing projects it supports. A report will be presented to committee in July.

Student chefs up for the cup

STUDENTS Iza Kalyane Araujo and Alexandria Achilleos represented Hammersmith and Fulham College in the North London Cup Chefs Competition at Hackney Community College.

Five colleges took part in the competition on March 18: Hackney College, Waltham Forest College, College of North West London, Hertford Regional College and Hammersmith and Fulham College.

The Hammersmith and Fulham team came second. Principal Janet Gardner presented the students with Westfield Vouchers.

For the past six weeks both students have been working together nearly every day to master the menu and techniques required to produce the three-course menu and bread in the three-and-a half-hour time frame. They had to work together so that they were able to communicate without talking and to know how each other was feeling, what they were thinking and how on track they were with each dish.

■ BEST INDIAN ESTABLISHMENT: Overall winner, Madhus, celebrate their success. Inset right: Mark Hix

Mark, my word! Writer scoops top food award

BY LWN REPORTER
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LONDON Weekly News star columnist Mark Hix has won the top prize in the London Food Awards – with his Hix Mayfair voted the No 1 hotel restaurant in the world's No 1 city.

Hix Mayfair at Brown's Hotel in Albemarle Street, where Mark is Director of Food and Lee Keeble is executive chef, beat nine of the capital's other finest restaurants nominated for the award.

For full report, see Page 16.

The Marriott Hotel in Grosvenor Square played host to the awards. The black-tie event acknowledged and celebrated the accomplishments, determination and hard work of various professionals, establishments and businesses from the London food sector.

A delighted Irfan Younis, of event organisers Creative Oceanic, said: "We received a vast amount of nominations from the public for the many top class restaurants and food provider's in London, our aim is to ensure their hard work doesn't go unnoticed. We would like to congratulate all the winners and the finalists who had tough competition this year and we hope the public and the nominees continue to support their local hard working and thriving industry."

The ceremony brought together suppliers, servers and specialists, recognising their hard work and commitment in providing their customers with the best products and service.

London food producers are now being urged to compete with the best in another one of the country's top food awards competitions.

Organisers say the Quality Food Awards 2016 will be dishing up another chance for success across the board, from the smallest artisan producer to the largest multi-nationals.

The awards are considered by many to be the ultimate endorsement of food products and, because each product is put through a rigorously fair judging process by a team of over 200 food experts, consumers and entrants know that each winning accreditation is credible and deserved.

"Now in its 37th year, these prestigious awards are perfect for small and large producers alike," said Helen Lyons, of organisers Metropolis Business Media. "We are inviting entries for the Quality Food Awards, the Good Choice! Awards – recognising excellence in the healthy option and free-from sector – and the Quality Drink Awards, celebrating the very best in wines, beer, cider, whiskies and spirits. What sets us apart is the impartiality and rigour of the judging process, which sits at the heart of everything we do."

The awards cover 85 categories, including chilled and frozen products, seasonal goods, drinks, and confectionary. The opening date for entries is June 24 and judging begins on August 1.

The winners will be announced at ceremonies at London's Grosvenor House on November 10.

■ HOTEL RESTAURANT OF THE YEAR: Hix Mayfair (Browns Hotel)

■ FINE DINING RESTAURANT OF THE YEAR: Bank Restaurant & Bar

Awards roll of honour

THERE were 26 sought-after accolades awarded on the evening and the winners were as follows:

Dairy Food Provider of the Year CWE Dairies (Newham).
Fresh Produce Provider of the Year Link Class London (Wandsworth).
Meat Supplier of the Year Tom Hixson (City of London).
Frozen Food Provider of the Year Fine Frozen Foods (Hounslow).
Ambient Food Supplier of the Year Woods Foodservice (Ealing).
Seafood Supplier of the Year Unique Seafood (Greenwich).
Bakery of the Year The London Bread & Cake Company (Enfield).
Best Chilled Food Supplier Kaspas (Lambeth).
Best Street Food Anna Mae (City of London).
Best World Cuisine Maroush (Westminster).
Hotel Restaurant the Year Hix Mayfair (Browns Hotel, Kensington and Chelsea).
Caterer of the Year The London Kitchen (Lambeth).
Fine Dining Restaurant of the Year Bank Restaurant & Bar (Westminster).
Traditional British Restaurant of the Year The Mayfair Chippy (Westminster).
Best Mexican Establishment Desperados (Islington).
Best Seafood Establishment Fish Works (Marylebone).
Best Mediterranean Establishment Jose Pizarro (Southwark).
Best Vegetarian Establishment Riverside Vegetaria (Kingston Upon Thames).

■ TRADITIONAL BRITISH RESTAURANT OF THE YEAR: Winners are The Mayfair Chippy

THE following categories were split into five regions, with regional winners and one overall winner:

■ Pan Asian Restaurant of the Year, North went to Cha Char.
■ Pan Asian Restaurant of the Year, East went to Song Que Cafe.
■ Pan Asian Restaurant of the Year, South went to Maki Yaki.
■ Pan Asian Restaurant of the Year, West went to Boys Authentic Thai.
■ Pan Asian Restaurant of the Year, Central went to Hakkasan.
The overall winner of Pan Asian Restaurant of the Year is Maki Yaki

■ Best Italian Establishment, North went to La Gioconda Pizzorante.
■ Best Italian Establishment, East went to Il Guscio.
■ Best Italian Establishment, South went to Bellenie's Osteria. Best Italian Establishment, West went to Trattoria Sorrentina.
■ Best Italian Establishment, Central went to Locanda Locatelli.
The overall winner of the Best Italian Establishment is Il Guscio

■ Best Indian Establishment, North went to Nujenna Finest Indian Cuisine.
■ Best Indian Establishment, East went to Lahore Kebab House.
■ Best Indian Establishment, South went to Khanage.
■ Best Indian Establishment, West went to Madhus.
■ Best Indian Establishment, Central went to The Painted Heron.
The overall winner of the Best Indian Establishment is Madhus

■ Gastro Pub of the Year, North went to The Green Dragon.
■ Gastro Pub of the Year, East went to The Eagle.
■ Gastro Pub of the Year, South went to The Dukes Head.
■ Gastro Pub of the Year, West went to Pheasant Inn.
■ Gastro Pub of the Year, Central went to The Albion.
The overall winner of the Gastro Pub of the Year is The Green Dragon

■ Cafe/Bistro of the Year, North went to Bonito Cafe
■ Cafe/Bistro of the Year, East went to Poco
■ Cafe/Bistro of the Year, South went to Grind Coffee Bar
■ Cafe/Bistro of the Year, West went to Labi Deli
■ Cafe/Bistro of the Year, Central went to Cafe Phillies
The overall winner of Cafe/Bistro of the Year is Bonito Cafe

■ Takeaway of the Year, North went to The Best Turkish Kebab.
■ Takeaway of the Year, East went to Wilsons Fish & Chips.
■ Takeaway of the Year, South went to Morley's.
■ Takeaway of the Year, West went to Barracuda Takeaway & Restaurant.
■ Takeaway of the Year, Central went to 2 Sisters Tandoori.
The overall winner of Takeaway of the Year is Morley's

■ Restaurant of the Year, North went to Thymari.
■ Restaurant of the Year, East went to HKK.
■ Restaurant of the Year, South went to Pete Denhart.
■ Restaurant of the Year, West went to Charlotte's Place.
■ Restaurant of the Year, Central went to The 5 Fields.
The overall winner of the Restaurant of the Year is Pete Denhart

Wine & Dine, the food and drink page for west London PAGE 21

LONDON WIDE

University hails its benefactors

THE University of West London hosted its annual donors and scholars lunch last month.

The event, on March 18, brought together scholarship recipients and alumni, friends and trusts who generously give in aid of scholarships.

Last year alone, 110 donors generously donated over £120,000 in aid of scholarships that have in turn helped more than 100 students; from postgraduates to those in junior academies. The vice-chancellor, Professor Peter John, thanked the donors for their continued support and for making a real difference to student lives as they work towards realising their education and career goals.

The lunch was prepared and served by students of the London College of Hospitality and Tourism.

Katarina Kostrevc, recipient of the Mona Blackman Scholarship, gave a performance on violin of the 1st Movement from Cesar Franck's Violin Sonata in A Major – accompanied by Natasa Sarcevic on piano.

Claudia Duduman, recipient of the Alistair Telfer Award, and in her first year of studying for a BA (Hons) degree in International Hotel Management at the London College of Hospitality and Tourism, gave a speech.

■ TALL ORDER: In its recent survey charting more than 600,000 buildings across the country, data company GeoPhy found the Shard, *pictured*, to be the most expensive skyscraper in the UK. The firm used algorithms to value property that take into account data sets relating to location, reliability and proximity to public transport, the local environment, nearby shops and the condition of the building. Take a look at London's most expensive towers and their values: 1 The Shard – £1.49bn; 2 HSBC Tower – £990m, *pictured left*; 3 Citigroup Tower – £971m; 4 One Canada Square – £935m; 5 Walkie Talkie – £897m; 6 Leadenhall Building – £843m; 7 Citypoint – £777m; 8 1 Churchill Place – £700m; 9 The Gherkin – £619m; 10 Heron Tower – £554m; 11 Broadgate Tower – £476m; 12 Willis Building – £475m; 13 25 Churchill Place – £381m; 14 Tower 42 – £379m; 15 Euston Tower – £228m

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Court clears death crash lorry driver

BY LWN REPORTER
editorial@londonweeklynews.co.uk

A LORRY driver accused of causing death by careless driving has walked free from court.

Vincent Doyle failed to spot student Janina Gehlau, 26, in the cycle lane as he manoeuvred his Foden truck to turn left at busy Ludgate Circus in central London, jurors at the Old Bailey were told last Thursday.

The court heard that he should have been aware the German postgraduate was catching up as he waited for 23 seconds at the red light, having overtaken her some 200 metres before the junction. It was argued that if his mirrors had been correctly positioned, he would have been able to see her for three to five seconds before his wheels clipped hers, sending her underneath the vehicle.

Doyle, 45, denied the charge of causing Mrs Gehlau's death by careless driving on the morning of October 17, 2014, and the jury deliberated for less than an hour before clearing him.

After the verdict was returned, Mrs Gehlau's family, who sat in court with a German translator, appeared downcast and her husband, Marcel, shook uncontrollably and wept before being led from court.

Judge Gerald Gordon told the court: "I would like it to be made absolutely clear to the family that the verdict of the jury does not imply any form of criticism of Mrs Gehlau."

He added that it may be that the differing rules of the road from Germany were "a factor".

In a statement Mrs Gehlau's mother, Andrea Tasic, said: "We are devastated by the verdict and do not feel that we have got justice for Janina. We would like to thank the emergency services who tried so hard to save her and everyone who has supported us since her death.

"My only hope is that this makes people think twice before cycling in London. Too many families are losing loved ones in these circumstances and action needs to be taken to improve safety before there are any more tragedies."

Student wins accolade as a young hotelier

TALENTED University of West London student Gerald Murati was part of the winning team at the 2016 Young Hoteliers Summit competition.

This is the third consecutive year that students from the London College of Hospitality and Tourism have enjoyed success at the summit's student competition. Two UWL students, Gerald and Perpetua Kirschstein, took part in this year's competition.

The summit is an annual event that brings together young talent from over 40 hospitality schools from around the world, and took place at the Ecole Hôtelière de Lausanne in Switzerland, from 14-16 March 2016. The event includes workshops and inspiring talks from industry leaders, as well as the student challenge competition.

Students were divided into teams and were set the challenge to suggest how to reduce the time for a graduate to become a hotel General Manager in a Four Seasons hotel in just nine years, as the average time taken is currently 17 years. UWL student Gerald Murati was able to draw upon his studies and his experience working at the Ritz Hotel to win the competition with his team.

Dr Charalampos Giousmpasoglou, Associate Professor in Hospitality and Food Studies, said: "This was once again an exciting experience. Both the students and the College have the valuable opportunity to create links and network with colleagues and top industry professionals. We look forward to participating in next year's Young Hoteliers Summit."

Council roles

FOLLOWING the resignation of councillors Victoria Borwick and Joanna Gardner, the official notice of election for the election of two councillors for the Abingdon ward of the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea has been published.

Nomination packs for prospective candidates are available from the Elections Office by calling 020 7361 3444 or from Kensington Town Hall, Hornton Street, London W8 7NX.

Completed nominations must be returned to the Returning Officer at Kensington Town Hall by 4pm on Thursday, April 7.

If the election is contested the poll will take place on Thursday, May 5 between 7am and 10pm.

New store

A NEW Timberland footwear store has opened at 158 Oxford Street, the brand's sixth London store.

The 90 -square metre space on one of London's most iconic and busiest shopping streets will stock footwear with a selection of accessories across menswear, womenswear and kidswear.

The company says the new opening is a key move in connecting with a wider audience and younger consumer in the brand's quest to become the largest and most sustainable lifestyle brand on earth.

Relax over tea with the Queen (but no selfies)

BY GEOFF BAKER
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THE Queen is to host the first of her summer garden parties at Buckingham Palace on May 10 – and doubtless many guests are already flustered over what to wear or say.

Having entertained an estimated two million people at her parties, Her Majesty is relaxation personified at such events but they can be a daunting prospect for many of the up to 8,000 guests who attend each one and who may be uncertain of the do's and don't's.

As with any swish function, the first rule is don't be late. Garden parties take place from 4pm to 6pm, but the Palace gates will be open from 3pm in order for everyone to get settled in time.

"The Queen and The Duke of Edinburgh, accompanied by other members of the Royal Family, enter the garden at 4pm, when the National Anthem is played by one of the two military bands playing selections of music during the afternoon," advises Buckingham Palace.

"After the playing of the National Anthem, The Queen and The Duke of Edinburgh, together with other members of the Royal Family, circulate among the guests through 'lanes' which are peculiar to Royal garden parties. Each takes a different route and random presentations are made so that everyone has an equal chance of speaking to Her Majesty and members of her family. The Queen and other members of the Royal Family eventually arrive at the Royal tea tent, where they meet further guests.

"There are tea tents for other guests. Tea and other refreshments are served from long buffet tables. The quantities served are enormous. At a typical garden party, around 27,000 cups of tea, 20,000 sandwiches and 20,000 slices of cake are consumed. Some 400 waiting staff are involved in the serving.

"At about 6pm, The Queen and other members of the Royal Family leave the garden, when the National Anthem is played to mark the end of the party."

But what to do if one is randomly chosen to be presented to Her Majesty? The big new rule is No Selfies.

Although it states on the invitation that cameras are not permitted at garden parties, in recent years an impudent trend has begun where some guests like to record their privileged visit on their smart phones. This is very much frowned upon and will identify you as a bad egg.

Although anyone who is presented to The Queen will be briefed in advance on the etiquette by a gentleman usher preceding Her Majesty, it is good to know what to expect and for advice we turned to an expert royalist blogger who goes by the name of Royal Protocol.

■ ROYAL APPOINTMENT: The Queen's summer garden parties begin again next month

Mr Protocol, a student from Northern Ireland who states that he has attended many royal events of recent years, advises: "Once you have been presented, you are faced with the question of what to say. The Queen is always addressed as 'Your Majesty' on the first count and thereafter as 'Ma'am'; according to Buckingham Palace, this should rhyme with jam, not palm.

"Other members of the royal family are treated with similar respect: 'Your Royal Highness' then 'Sir' or 'Ma'am.' You should let the royal personage lead the conversation, not try to change the subject, and ask only the politest of questions. 'Is Your Majesty enjoying the performance?' is acceptable, but 'How's Philip and Charles?' is most definitely, absolutely out of the question.

"When referring to The Queen, 'The Queen' is fine, though if you want to be certain of being polite I would recommend at least once saying 'Her Majesty'. It is also quite rude to refer to Prince Charles, Prince Philip, or Princess Anne; instead, you should opt for The Prince of Wales, The Duke of Edinburgh, and The Princess Royal. 'His Royal Highness' or 'Her Royal Highness' may also be used, though be sure to qualify whom exactly you are referring to. When you are in conversation with a member of the royal family, be yourself but remember that His Royal Highness is not going to appreciate your company if it is too loud, tongue-tied, rude, or bumptious."

The dress code for royal garden parties is uniforms, morning dress or lounge suits for men. Most men wear lounge suits, and 'afternoon dress' for women – basically any outfit suitable for a wedding, preferably with a hat.

Ladies are also advised that stiletto heels are probably not the best of ideas as you will be standing for some while on the palace lawns and will not want to sink into them, so flats, wedges or shoes with a thicker heel are advised.

And don't even think of trying to pocket the cutlery. Although most guests are above such rudeness, in recent years there has been at least one occasion when irreplaceable crockery and cutlery has been stolen from The Queen – with eight pieces of silver cutlery from King George III's reign, eight sideplates and cups marked 'EIIR', and pieces from Queen Victoria's time being taken by somebody clearly eager to impress guests in their own home with the vulgarity of their ingratitude and bad manners.

For those keen to record their special day with some souvenir, silver EIIR spoons are available at £30 each from the Buckingham Palace shop, where the new edition of The Queen's 90th birthday commemorative cup and saucer can also be bought for £55.

Where to see a royal this week

FULL details of events in the ever-busy diaries of the many members of the Royal Family are available from the official website *www.royal.gov.uk* but here's their schedule for the week ahead

April 6
■ ***The Princess Royal,*** as Commandant-in-Chief, First Aid Nursing Yeomanry (Princess Royal's Volunteer Corps), will attend a Reception at Clothworkers' Hall, Dunster Court, Mincing Lane EC3.

April 7
■ ***Princess Alexandra,*** as Royal Patron, will present the Alzheimer's Society People Awards at St James's Palace.

April 9
■ ***The Duke of Edinburgh***, as Captain General, Royal Marines, will attend the Mountbatten Festival of Music at the Royal Albert Hall.

April 11
■ ***The Princess Royal***, as President, The Duke of Edinburgh's Commonwealth Study Conferences, will hold the Commonwealth Study Conference Leaders Conference Opening Reception at St James's Palace.
■ ***The Princess Royal***, as President, Carers Trust, will attend a Reception at Speaker's House, House of Commons.
■ ***The Duke of Gloucester***, as President, British Expertise, will present the British Expertise International Awards at the Royal Garden Hotel, Kensington High Street.
■ ***The Duke of Kent*** will attend the opening Reception for the Commonwealth Study Conference Leaders Programme at St James's Palace.

April 12
■ ***Princess Alexandra***, as Honorary Freewoman, The Worshipful Company of Clothworkers, will attend a Reception at Clothworkers' Hall, Dunster Court, Mincing Lane EC3.

President might be happy to be taken for a ride

IS Whitehall hoping to saddle up President Obama in a bid to recreate one of the most iconic images of the UK's special relationship with America when the world's most powerful man visits The Queen at Windsor Castle later this month?

On what is expected to be his last trip to Britain before the end on his term in office, President Obama is to have a private lunch with Her Majesty at Windsor and the visit could provide the opportunity to cement the impression that both the White House and Downing Street want to make.

It is no secret that the President is pressing for the UK to defy the Brexit lobby and remain in Europe and he is expected to re-voice his opinion on the importance of this when he and Prime Minister David Cameron stage a joint press conference at No 10.

However, as pictures will speak much louder than words in the PR battle over Europe, royal watchers are wondering whether spin doctors may aspire to re-stage the magic monarchy moment of 1982 when The Queen rode out at Windsor in the company of then-President Reagan.

The brief, 30-second photo-call for that occasion generated images that appeared on front pages all around the world and a recreation of the impression of solidarity that it made could be just what the Stay campaign needs to help sway those who are undecided on which way to vote in the EU referendum of June 23.

As the recent and excellent ITV film *Our Queen At 90* revealed that Her Majesty still rides, if time and the sensitive politics of the President's visit allows, little could better reinforce the special relationship than a short trot together.

Clearly, Downing Street would have to be super-sensitive about encouraging any such side-by-side ride as the Prime Minister's aides want to avoid any row with Brexiteers over The Queen being drawn into an appearance of "taking sides" in the referendum of which she is constitutionally set above. On the other hand, it could be too good a seemingly-innocent opportunity to waste.

When Her Majesty rode out with President Reagan in 1982, she rode her beloved Burmese, while the President and former cowboy movie star was lent an eight-year-old stallion called Centennial, a gift to The Queen from the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, in which he rode high in a British saddle unlike those preferred in the States.

■ ROYAL VISIT: US President Barack Obama

At a reception later, The Queen joked about the President having to learn about riding in a non-American way.

"I greatly enjoyed our ride together this morning, and I was much impressed by the way in which you coped so professionally with a strange horse and a saddle that must have seemed even stranger," she said to much laughter at a state banquet.

Her Majesty also bolstered the UK-US relationship when she added: "Our close relationship is not just based on history, kinship, and language, strong and binding though these are. It is based on the same values and the same beliefs, evolved over many years in these islands since Magna Carta and vividly stated by the Founding Fathers of the United States.

"This has meant that over the whole range of human activity, the people of the United States and the people of Britain are drawing on each other's experience and enriching each other's lives. Of course, we do not always think and act alike, but through the years our common heritage, based on the principles of common law, has prevailed over our diversity. And our toleration has moderated our arguments and misunderstandings.

"Above all, our commitment to a common cause has led us to continue to stand together today in the defence of freedom."

President Reagan responded: "As we rode over these magnificent grounds this morning, I thought again about how our people share, as you have mentioned, a common past. We are bound by so much more than just language. "It's been said that the greatest glory of a free-born people is to transmit that freedom to their children. That is a responsibility our people share. Together, and eager for peace, we must face an unstable world where violence and terrorism, aggression and tyranny constantly encroach on human rights. Together, committed to the preservation of freedom and our way of life, we must strengthen a weakening international order and restore the world's faith in peace and the rule of law. We in the free world share an abiding faith in our people and in the future of mankind. The challenge of freedom is to reject an unacceptable present for what we can cause the future to be. Together, it is within our power to confront the threats to peace and freedom and to triumph over them."

As it could be effortlessly argued by both the White House and Downing Street that both Britain and America now once again face "the threats to peace and freedom" with the war against Islamist extremism, one equestrian picture that says "we ride together" could better emphasise that a US and united Europe would be a stronger defence against that threat than any amount of joint press conferences at No 10.

Capital nights

EDITED BY GEOFF BAKER

When Macca went down a storm at the Maracana

AS Paul McCartney prepares to guest-star in the new *Pirates Of The Caribbean* film, *Dead Men Tell No Tales*, it is a role well-suited to the Beatles bass guitarist who is little-known as an old sea dog.

Sir Paul, who regularly holidays in the Caribbean, follows his Rolling Stones pal Keith Richards in having a cameo part alongside his friend Johnny Depp. Sir Paul is believed to have agreed to appear in the Pirates movie to repay the favour that Depp did him when the actor guitarist played a small part in the video for Macca's song *Early Days*, in which Depp jammed with a band of blues musicians.

But he would have jumped at the chance of a spot of swashbuckling as Macca has a love of the sea and for at least 30 years he has been a regular sailor, forever grabbing the chance to relax on a little Laser sail boat whenever his never-ending rock tour docks at anywhere close to the water.

And he is ideally-placed to star with Depp if any of his scenes are shot in the raging storms that characterise the Pirates movies, for Sir Paul has been in the eye of the hurricane himself – so much so that on one day on his globe-trotting he was feared to be lost to Davy Jones' Locker himself.

Sir Paul gave his team a fright in Brazil when on the eve of his first-ever gig in Rio de Janeiro he decided to unwind by taking his tiny boat out into the Atlantic for a sail on his own – not knowing that one of the fiercest hurricanes in decades was about to strike.

Paul set sail into the ocean in the Laser with aides on a security power boat shadowing him in case he was pestered by fans. He was happily sailing far out to sea when, out of nowhere and with no warning, the skies suddenly went black, the waves grew to fearsome heights, the heavens opened and the hurricane broke.

So fierce was the storm that it completely bent out of shape the steel scaffolding that riggers had erected to hold the stage at Rio's giant Maracana Stadium and so flooded the backstage area that the room set aside to be his dressing room was filled with six feet of water.

Meanwhile, Sir Paul's team were frantically searching for the rock idol. On hearing that he was far offshore sailing single-handed in the raging tempest, they raced to Copacabana Beach fearing for his safety.

Their hearts sank when a huge wave tossed the security speed boat up onto the beach and as they peered out through the driving rain they saw Sir Paul's boat suddenly tip over.

But as ashen-faced aides prepared to call out the coastguard and a search and rescue helicopter, Captain Macca reappeared from under the waves, righted the dinghy and calmly surfed safely to the shore, asking his team what they were worrying about and nonchalantly dismissing the danger.

On getting back to the hotel, Sir Paul was told by his drenched production team that the Maracana gig the next day would have to be cancelled as the stadium was flooded, the stage frame was wrecked and all of the weather experts were forecasting that the downpour would not end for days.

"No, the rain will stop," predicted Macca with a confidence that defied all signs from the hurricane that it most certainly would not, "the gig will go on."

All through the night, as hundreds of riggers straightened the steel and fought to put up the stage, the rain continued. The next day, as the vast stadium was sandbagged and huge pumps were brought in from all over Brazil to drain the backstage, the downpour went on and on.

"We have to cancel the show," Sir Paul was told repeatedly.

"No," he insisted, "the rain will stop".

At 8.59 that night, just one minute before Paul took to the stage, the rain abruptly stopped and Macca went on, not only to perform but to perform to the largest stadium crowd in the history of rock and roll – with 184,000 people crammed into the Maracana.

■ CAPTAIN FANTASTIC: Paul McCartney in concert

Is National Lottery show's number up?

FOLLOWING a slump in the ratings, TV chiefs are asking if there is any point in the BBC continuing to pay for the rights to screen the National Lottery.

Although both the BBC and the Lottery bizarrely refuse to say how much public money is shelled out for the right to screen Britain's most disappointment-making TV show, it is believed to be costing the corporation around £2 million.

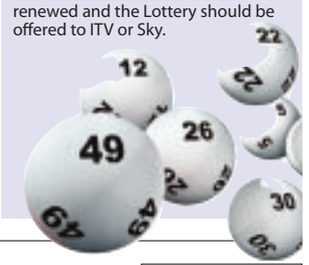
However, as the BBC is now having to find all manner of savings, questions are growing over whether the Lottery is worth it anymore.

When the Lottery was first launched it drew an audience of 19 million, which was to be expected as we all tuned in to ruefully discover that although it could be you, it wasn't. The audience then settled down to be around 6.2 million in 1997.

But two decades on, the audience has fallen by considerably less than what it used to be when the chances of winning hugely excited the nation.

Whether the drop in the figures has anything to do with the recent and controversial change in the Lottery rules which have made it far harder to win the top prize has not been researched, but these days many feel that they have more chance of becoming the King of Siam than they do of landing the jackpot.

Now, with the Lottery attracting just 3.9 million viewers, the cost-conscious BBC is having to ask if the show should go on, or whether its current contract should not be renewed and the Lottery should be offered to ITV or Sky.



The sugar, flour milk and eggs factor

X Factor mastermind Simon Cowell is 13 years overdue in repaying a bet – to eat his hat. Or at least to eat a huge cake shaped like his hat.

Simon is owing the hugely-fattening payback after long ago losing a wager with comedian Tony Hawks, author of the best-seller *Round Ireland With A Fridge*, the story of how Hawks won another bet that he could not hitchhike around the emerald isle towing a fridge.

Following the huge success of that bet – Tony's book went on to sell around a million copies – he was chatting to Simon who argued that writing a best-seller was one thing but he bet him that he could not write a Top 20 pop record. Tony accepted the bet and Simon said that if the comedian won, he would eat his hat.

"But you're not actually going to eat a hat, are you? How can anyone digest a hat?" said Tony, and the pair shook hands on a deal that instead the talent-spotter would entirely consume a large cake in the shape of a hat.

Following a chance meeting with the late Sir Norman Wisdom, Tony learned that the comedy actor was a massive star in Albania, largely his films were those of the few allowed in the Communist country during the dictatorship of Enver Hoxha. In Hoxha's view, Sir Norman's proletarian struggles against the odds were a Communist parable on class war.

A plan was hatched. Tony hooked up with musicals legend Tim Rice and they wrote a song, *Big In Albania,* which Sir Norman was persuaded to record with Tony. The record was released in Albania, where it went to No 18 in the charts in 2003.

But Tony revealed recently that Simon has still yet to pay up.

"I lost touch with him after we had the hit, but he still owes me as he hasn't yet eaten the cake," said Tony.

As nutrition experts calculate that it would take weight-watching Simon 21 hours of constant walking to burn off the 6,000+ calories in a large cake, the *X Factor* chief is probably wise to keep hedging his bets on the wager.

■ FOOD FOR THOUGHT: Simon Cowell may have to eat his words

BY NICKY SWEETLAND AND JACK DIXON ● EDITED BY GEOFF BAKER

Stand up if you think you're funny enough

YOU think you're so amusing? Then read on, as the BBC has launched a hunt for the hilarity kings of tomorrow, which could be the big step for those hoping to make themselves into multi-millionaires by forging successful careers in the funny business.

Judges of the BBC Radio New Comedy Award are searching to find the comedy stars of the future, who will follow in the lucrative footsteps of the likes of previous winner Peter Kay, who was recently reported in the Sunday Times Rich List to be worth £25 million.

The competition, which first started in 1995, has kick-started the careers of many top UK comics, with other past winners and finalists including Alan Carr, Josie Long, Lee Mack, Sarah Millican and Russell Howard.

For the first time the competition will be hosted by Radio 4, which will broadcast the live final with the heats running on Radio 4 Extra.

Sioned Wiliam, Commissioning Editor for Comedy, BBC Radio 4 said: "It feels right that the competition will now be hosted by Radio 4 which is the home of radio comedy. We have a long tradition of supporting new comedy talent and it's very exciting to be searching for a brand new comedy star."

Whoever wins will take home £1,000 and a 15-minute script commission from BBC Radio Comedy. All finalists will be mentored by the in-house comedy department across the year and receive advice, guidance and the chance to appear in slots across the BBC.

Entrants need to submit a no-more- than-five-minute comedy routine and complete the application form at *www.bbc.co.uk/newcomedyaward* before the closing date of Tuesday, April 19. The best 60 entries will be selected for six regional heats in June, recording in London's Up The Creek. The semi-finals and finals will be recorded at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival, with the final being broadcast live on BBC Radio 4 on Sunday, August 14.

LAUGH OUT LOUD: Fledgling talents Lucy Beaumont and Steve Bugeja

The judging panel will consist of an editor from BBC Comedy; Steve Bennett, editor of *Chortle*; plus a different stand-up comedian at each heat. At the final, an expert panel of judges made up of top names from the world of comedy will decide the winner, live on BBC Radio 4.

Recent winners include 2012's Lucy Beaumont, who has a second series of *To Hull And Back* starting on Radio 4 later this year; and 2013's Steve Bugeja, who has supported Russell Kane on his tour and contributed material to a number of BBC TV and radio comedy shows. In 2014 the title was taken by Lost Voice Guy, who is currently writing a radio pilot for in-house development, and in 2015 it was won by Yuriko Kotani, who is now working closely with the BBC Radio Comedy department.

The London heats will be at Up The Creek on June 7 and 8. But the competition will be stiff as making it in comedy is one of the toughest acts in showbusiness. As the old gag goes, what do 99 per cent of all aspiring comics say during their gig?

"You want fries with that?"

AND the award for the actress very much most likely to make it as the next huge star of Hollywood goes to…. West Londoner Olivia Lovibond.

The knock out-beautiful Olivia, best-known for stealing every one of her scenes as Broadcasting House PA Izzy Gould in the BBC's hilarious self-parody *W1A*, has landed the female lead in *Hooten And The Lady*, the coming Sky blockbuster which is filming now and in which she will be supported by former Bond girl Jane Seymour.

Olivia, who was born in Shepherd's Bush and educated at Latymer Upper School in Hammersmith, where she also trained with the Young Blood theatre company, is to play the posh bird, Lady Alexandra Lindo-Parker, with Michael Landes as Hooten, in the nail-biting escapades of a maverick adventurer who teams up with an upper class historian to travel the globe searching for hidden treasures from the past.

The multi-million pound budget series is being filmed in locations including Moscow, Brazil, Cape Town and Macedonia and the eight-hour drama will air on Sky 1 and around the world later this year. TV executives who have had a look at the rushes are predicting that the series will be a huge hit.

TIPPED FOR THE TOP: Up and coming actress Olivia Lovibond's 'beauty is stunning' say admirers

"*Hooten And The Lady* is going to springboard Olivia into the big time," said an insider. "Not only is she a first class actor, she has a mesmerising look that makes her stand out as the classic English beauty. Those in the know are widely tipping Olivia to follow Keira Knightley, Kate Beckinsale and Rachel Weisz all the way to the top in Hollywood. Her beauty is stunning and we have not seen the like of it since Jean Shrimpton was turning the heads of the world in the Sixties. In fact it has already been suggested that somebody should make a film of Shrimpton's amazing story just to cast Olivia in the role, because she is the spitting image of the supermodel. Olivia is very much the one to watch of the year. In a very little while everybody is going to be talking about her."

The in-crowd will be out at Glastonbury on polling day

WE do hope that Adele's people may have warned her that if Britain votes to leave Europe she may get blamed for it – or thanked, depending on your view.

Coldplay and Muse may get it in the neck – or receive a bouquet of flowers – too.

For the great brains behind the Government-backed Stay In campaign have just realised that they did not factor in a possibly-key event when hitting on the date for the UK's decision of the millennium – Glastonbury.

Although most people will be going to the polling stations on Thursday June 23, 177,000 voters will probably note – as that is the day when most of those with Glasto tickets will be travelling to the festival.

Due to the annual pressure of wanting to get to Worthy Farm in good time to pitch a tent in a good spot, most will not be wanting to waste time going off to vote before they leave home for the festival where this year Adele, Muse and Coldplay are headlining.

They could of course vote at the festival ground, were it not for the slight drawback that there will be no voting booths at the festival ground.

And as most Glasto-goers tend to be liberal thinkers, political analysts predict that the majority of the festival crowd would vote In.

But if the vote is as close as everyone is expecting, the loss of the Glasto In vote could tilt the balance so that we go Out instead.

Oo-err.

FARM LABOUR: Adele will put in a shift at Glastonbury

WINE & DINE

The food and drink page for West London

Your guest writer takes London's top food prize

LONDON Weekly News star columnist Mark Hix has won the top prize in the inaugural Food Awards London – with his Hix Mayfair voted the No 1 hotel restaurant in the world's No 1 city.

Hix Mayfair at Brown's Hotel in Albemarle Street, where Mark is Director of Food and Lee Keeble is executive chef, beat nine of the capital's other finest restaurants nominated for the award.

In making the award to the famed restaurant which is noted both for its outstanding menu of great British classics and its featured works of art by Tracey Emin, Bridget Riley and Rankin, the judges praised it for providing only "the very best".

Hix Mayfair, renowned for seasonally-sourced dishes including poached fillet of St Mary's Bay sea bass with Isle of Barra cockles and sea kale and Yorkshire Dales wild rabbit, Trealy Farm chorizo and hedgerow garlic pie, is a favourite haunt of top stars including supermodel David Gandy, designer Paul Smith and *Downton Abbey's* Lord Grantham, actor Hugh Bonneville.

In awarding Hix Mayfair the top prize, the judges said: "This award recognises the hotel that has a proven track record of striving to ensure the very best level of food and service provided at their restaurant. Attention to detail, commitment and structured approach to future developments to improve the overall guest experience is also key".

WINNING RECIPE: Mark Hix has been recognised at the Food Awards London. Right: ingredients for Mark's cod and fennel fish pie

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Cod and fennel pie – it's honest and comforting

MARK'S RECIPE OF THE WEEK

FISH pie is an honest, down-to-earth food packed with flavours. It makes perfect comfort food if you are sitting in front of the television after a hard day and also works equally well as a dinner party main course.

You can make this dish the day before and keep it in the fridge overnight. The basic recipe can be varied endlessly, according to what sustainable fish are available and what you like, but it is always good to include some smoked fish.

Ingredients (serves four to six)

- 500ml fish stock (or a good-quality fish stock cube dissolved in 500ml hot water)
- 2tbsp dry vermouth
- 1 fennel bulb, cored and finely diced
- 300g sustainable cod fillet, skinned, any residual bones removed and fillets cut into rough 3cm chunks
- 200g un-dyed smoked cod fillet, skinned, any residual bones removed and fillets cut into rough 3cm chunks
- 2tbsp chopped mixed green herbs, such as parsley, dill and chervil
- 60g butter
- 1.5-2kg floury potatoes, cooked and mashed with a little milk
- 20g fresh white breadcrumbs
- 30g grated cheddar or parmesan

For the sauce

- 50g butter
- 50g flour
- 175ml double cream
- 1tsp Dijon mustard
- Salt and freshly ground white pepper

Method

IN a large saucepan, bring the fish stock and vermouth to the boil, add the fennel, turn down the heat and cook gently for eight minutes.

Add the cod and smoked cod and poach for two minutes. Drain in a colander over a bowl, reserving the cooking liquid, and leave to cool.

To make the sauce: melt the butter in a heavy-based pan over a low heat, then stir in the flour and cook gently for a minute. Gradually add the reserved fish poaching liquid, stirring well until it has all been added and the mixture is smooth. Bring to the boil and simmer gently for 30 minutes.

Add the cream and continue to simmer for 10 minutes or so until the sauce has a thick consistency. Stir in the mustard. Season if necessary, then leave to cool for about 15 minutes or so.

Perfect comfort food: Cod and fennel pie (Jason Lowe)

GENTLY fold into the sauce the cooked fish with the fennel and the herbs. Spoon into a large pie dish or several individual ones, filling to 3cm from the top. Leave to set for about 30 minutes, so that the potato will sit on the sauce.

Meanwhile, preheat the oven to 180C/gas mark 4 and mix the butter into the mashed potato. Season with a little salt and freshly ground white pepper and add a little milk so that it is just soft enough to pipe with a piping bag or spread with a spatula on to the fish. Bake for 30 minutes, or a little less for smaller ones. Scatter on the breadcrumbs and cheese, and bake for 10-15 minutes until golden on top.

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Talk of the town

BY NICKY SWEETLAND

Inside line on prison life is a harsh lesson from dark world

Bad Girls the Musical
The Union Theatre ***

THIS was my first visit to the Union Theatre and it would be my last as they are moving the venue across the road over the next two weeks to, what I hope, will be better premises.

In its current state, the place has a seedy, dingy quality and is absolutely freezing, so any improvement would be very welcome.

My visit also marked my first ever viewing of the musical version of *Bad Girls*, which is based on the infamous ITV drama series from the 1990s.

Set in a fictional women's prison, the show plays to our curiosities about a world most of us won't ever experience – well hopefully. In a comedic but very bitty book, we are invited to experience a snapshot of life behind bars with many of the typical characters we are led to believe exist within these antiquated, archaic institutions.

Favourite roles from the original TV show are all there, including top dog and merry murderess Shell Dockley (Sinead Long), gangster's moll Yvonne Atkins (Christine Holman) and Mr Nasty prison warden Jim Fenner (Gareth Davies).

The story attempts to lump together a number of episodes of the original series with some nice musical numbers interwoven – along with an added humour element to lighten this otherwise harrowing and very dark morality fable.

This does mean however, that the show lacks a sense of flow, particularly for the first 20 minutes when, if you aren't familiar with the characters, the plot is confusing and somewhat bland.

The pace does pick up however, and once the wheels are in motion, the tale gallops along with vigour and variety. This is in a large part down to Christine Holman, who brings a burnished birr with every sweeping entrance. She is well matched by Sinead Long's hard faced con Dockley, and complemented by an accomplished comedy performance from Francine Rowan.

Tasked with the job of keeping the felons in line is fresh faced young guard Justin, played by newcomer Perry Meadowcroft, who is impressive while shunning the cougar's advances in *All Banged Up*.

The show stealer without any doubt however, is Jayne Ashley, one half of the Julies, whose act two heart breaker *Sorry*, depicting a phone call home, is momentous.

Will Keith's direction and Jo McShane's choreography are essentially on point, and make the most of the postage stamp sized stage area, but there are a few static and clunky scenes which feel a little underrehearsed.

I also found the era we were transported to a little confused, as the costumes suggested the late 90s but some of the props indicated the piece to be more contemporary.

Jailhouse dramas are always fascinating and this show gives a good account of the public perception of prison.

I can only hope someone is already penning *Orange is the New Black the Musical.*

■ INSIDE STORY: Bad Girls

Brothers in arms happy to be in No Man's Land

IAN McKellen and Patrick Stewart are to reunite on stage this year in Harold Pinter's masterpiece, ***No Man's Land,*** which will embark on a UK tour, opening in Sheffield from August 3, followed by dates in Newcastle, Brighton and Cardiff.

The production will then head into London's West End where it will play a limited 14-week engagement at the Wyndham's Theatre from September 8 with opening night for press on 20 September. ***No Man's Land*** was first performed at the iconic Wyndham's Theatre in 1975, with Ralph Richardson and John Gielgud, following its premiere at the National Theatre.

Directed by Sean Mathias, this production of ***No Man's Land*** received highly acclaimed reviews at the Cort Theatre in New York whilst in repertory alongside ***Waiting for Godot***, also starring stage and screen friends, McKellen and Stewart and directed by Mathias.

The production of ***Waiting for Godot*** had transferred from London where it celebrated a sell-out run at the Theatre Royal Haymarket, the last time these masters of British theatre shared a West End stage.

One summer's evening, two ageing writers, Hirst and Spooner, meet in a Hampstead pub and continue their drinking into the night at Hirst's stately house nearby. As the pair become increasingly inebriated, and their stories increasingly unbelievable, the lively conversation soon turns into a revealing power game, further complicated by the return home of two sinister younger men.

Stewart (Hirst) says: "I saw the original production of ***No Man's Land*** three times in one week at Wyndham's Theatre and would have seen it more if I could have afforded the tickets. I made a promise to myself that one day I would play Spooner or Hirst but to be doing it back at Wyndham's with Ian McKellen was a fantasy I never entertained."

McKellen (Spooner) says: "Playing Spooner to Patrick's Hirst on Broadway was a constant joy, which is why I am delighted to be back with him in the West End."

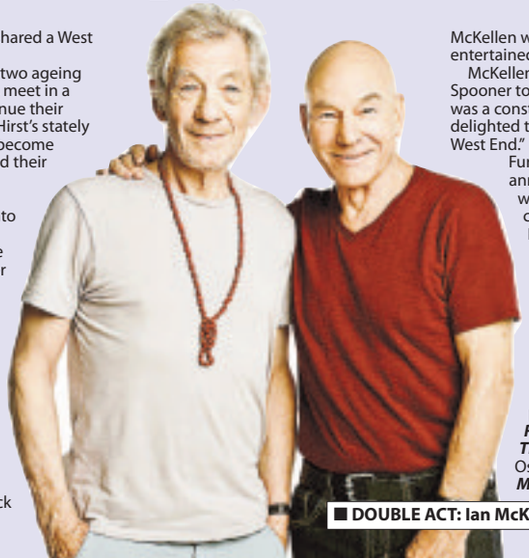
Further casting has yet to be announced for ***No Man's Land,*** which will have set and costume design by Stephen Brimson Lewis and lighting design by Peter Kaczorowski.

The multi award-winning McKellen has had a 55-year career on stage and on screen. For the Royal Shakespeare Company he has played Romeo, Macbeth, Iago and King Lear and at the National Theatre, in productions of ***Coriolanus, Richard III, Uncle Vanya*** and ***The Seagull***. He gained his first Oscar nomination for ***Gods and Monsters*** and his second for Gandalf in the ***Lord of the Rings*** trilogy. He is Magneto to Stewart's Xavier in the X-Men movies, Richard III and most recently Mr Holmes.

Multi award-winning Stewart has numerous notable stage credits to his name, including ***Anthony and Cleopatra, The Tempest, Macbeth, The Merchant of Venice, The Master Builder*** and his acclaimed solo adaptation of ***A Christmas Carol***. Known world-wide as Captain Jean Luc Picard in ***Star Trek: The Next Generation*** and Professor X in the X-Men franchise, his additional film and TV credits include the 2009 TV movie adaptation of ***Hamlet*** alongside David Tennant, Ahab in ***Moby Dick***, Ricky Gervais' ***Extras***, the new US comedy series, soon to be seen on UK TV, ***Blunt Talk***, the soon to be released thriller ***Green Room*** as well as ***Wilde Wedding*** with Glenn Close and John Malkovich.

British film and theatre director, writer and actor Mathias has been a long-time collaborator with McKellen.

This ***No Man's Land*** is produced by Stuart Thompson, Flying Freehold Productions and Playful Productions.



■ DOUBLE ACT: Ian McKellen and Patrick Stewart

Talk of the town

Comedian will stand up for his roots, no doubt

THE award-winning stand-up comedian Dane Baptiste will return to one of his favourite venues later this month when he brings his new show to the Soho Theatre.

The south London funny man made his debut at the venue in the heart of London's entertainment district and is looking forward to performing his second solo stand-up show, which is entitled Reasonable Doubts, writes Nicky Sweetland.

Since bursting onto the scene in 2014, Baptiste has become one of the most talked about comics around. He was nominated for Best Newcomer at the Edinburgh Comedy Awards, the first black Briton to have been nominated, and has performed acclaimed routines on Live at the Apollo as well as making numerous appearances on comedy panel shows including Safeworld and Celebrity Squares.

He told me about his new show and about what he hopes it will tell people about both his background and his rise to success.

Baptiste said: "The first show was about me introducing myself to the industry and kind of letting the comedy world as a whole know who I am. With the second show, the idea is to kind of prove, now that I've shown that I'm a comic, to now talk about things that matter to me so that I can deal with social commentary within my comedy as well.

"The show is called Reasonable Doubts because it's my second show and therefore it's like releasing that difficult second album and dealing with those personal doubts."

Baptiste is from Hither Green and worked in sales before making his foray into the world of entertainment. Alongside the UK tour, he has been working hard on a new sitcom, which has just been commissioned by BBC Three and is called Sunny D. It's written by and stars Baptiste, who plays himself desperate to leave the home he shares with his parents and twin sister Kadean.

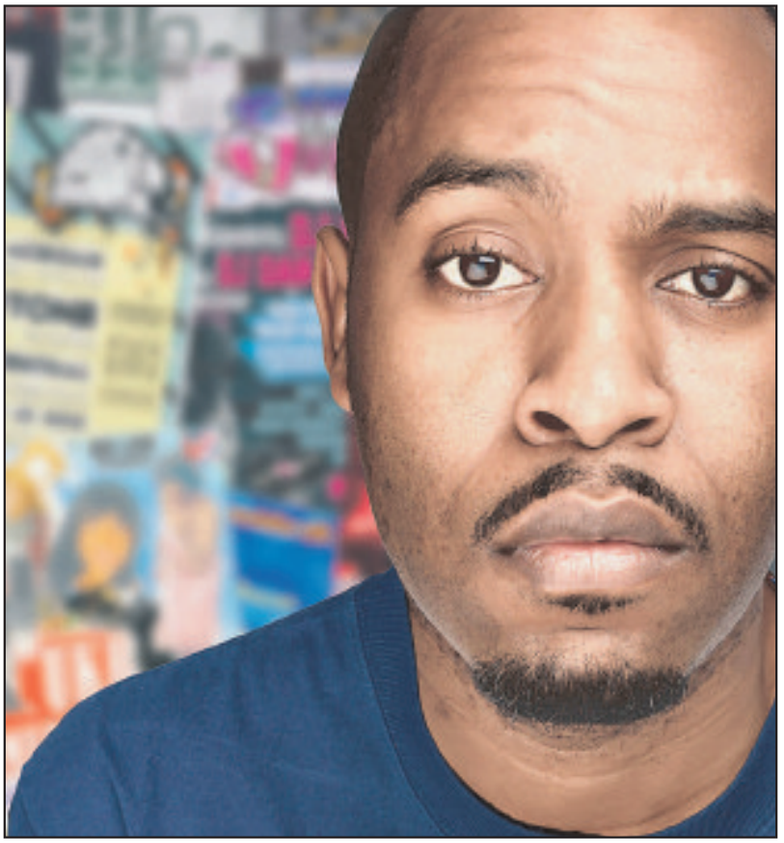
■ SOHO HO HO: Dane Baptiste will perform at the Soho Theatre from May 3 to 7

He has enjoyed a meteoric rise to fame, but is very aware of where his roots lie and is keen to portray to fans the different elements of being part of the celebrity showbusiness world.

"It's very different to being an idealistic creative and wanting to change the world because there's a lot more stakeholders involved in it. Basically I'm just being aware that it's very easy to compromise yourself and I'm just letting my audience know that I could be going stratospheric in a few years, which I do look forward to, but I'm well aware, I could very much lose myself. The idea of the show is to make people aware that before I became a bonafide entertainer, I at least at some point had a soul."

Baptiste will perform his Reasonable Doubts show at the Soho Theatre from May 3 to 7.

If you would like any more details you can visit the website sohotheatre.com



■ MOVING ON: Dane Baptiste has become one of the most talked about comics around

Picture this for drama

A BRAND new musical which offers to prove the notion that a picture tells a thousand words is set to make its world premiere at the St James Theatre this summer.

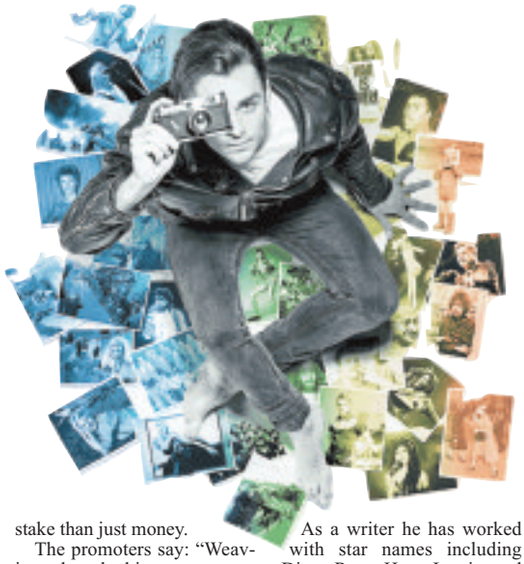
Exposure The Musical – Life Through A Lens runs for a limited season from July 16 until August 27 and with its unique partnership with Getty Images, the production is able to feature iconic and compelling imagery from one of the world's most remarkable collections.

Matthew Butson, vice president, Getty Images Archive says: "Imagery is the universal language of our time and Getty Images believes that pictures have the power to move the world.

"We are thrilled to partner with *Exposure* and we are extremely excited at the prospect of our imagery being used – both creatively and innovatively – within a theatrical setting."

The show follows a young photographer Jimmy Tucker as he faces the biggest and most exciting challenge of his life when a stranger commissions him to find and shoot the seven deadly sins alive and kicking in modern London.

But in a break-neck race through the night, a series of extraordinary encounters involving girlfriends, family history and the intoxicating cult of celebrity begin to reveal that there's a whole lot more at stake than just money.



The promoters say: "Weaving a breathtaking, contemporary score around a dazzlingly witty portrait of the price of fame, *Exposure* is an electrifying and brilliantly original new musical that will capture your heart… and just maybe your soul."

The show is written by Mike Dyer – book, lyrics and music – who has extensive experience in the music industry both as a performer and writer but is best known for playing Casey Hogan in *EastEnders*.

As a writer he has worked with star names including Diana Ross, Huey Lewis and Eric Clapton. He played the narrator in the multi-award winning musical *Blood Brothers*, with further stage work including *Jesus Christ Superstar* (Pilate/Caiaphas) and *Notre Dame de Paris* (Frollo/ Quasimodo).

Exposure The Musical – Life Through A Lens runs at the St James Theatre from July 16 until August 27. For more details you can visit the website *exposurethemusical.com*

Talk of the town

■ **FIGHT FOR JUSTICE: Dramatic scenes from The Toxic Avenger, which is now destined for the West End**

Is it a nerd? Is it insane? No, it's a toxic superhero

FULL casting has been announced for the European premiere of *The Toxic Avenger* at the Southwark Playhouse. The exciting new musical will boast a stellar cast of West End stars for the production, which was dubbed a "Rock and roll romp" during its Broadway run.

Mark Anderson stars as Toxie, The Toxic Avenger. He has most recently wowed audiences at the Prince of Wales Theatre as Elder Thomas in the original West End cast of *The Book of Mormon* for two years from 2013 to 2015. Other credits include *Legally Blonde* and *Love Me Tender.*

Anderson is joined by Hannah Grover as Sarah, Lizzii Hills as Ma Ferd, Marc Pickering as White Dude and Ashley Samuels as Black Dude.

The citizens of Tromaville are crying out for a hero – enter Melvin Ferd the Third, an aspiring earth scientist determined to clean up the toxic waste problem. But when a corrupt mayor and her government goons try to stop this heroic feat, Melvin is tossed into a vat of toxic waste and transformed into The Toxic Avenger, New Jersey's first superhero!

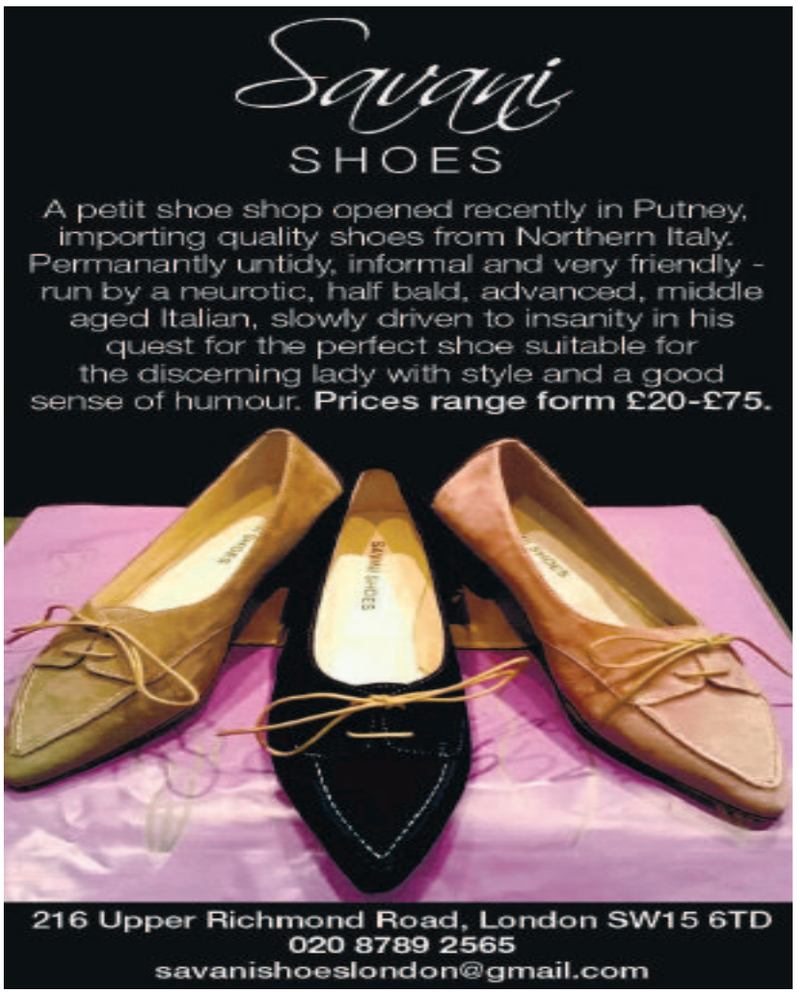
Toxie is a seven-foot mutant freak with superhuman strength and a supersized heart to match. He's out to save New Jersey, end global warming, woo the prettiest (blindest) librarian in town and get home in time for dinner, in this toxic love story with an environmental twist. Prepare to laugh, scream and sing as Toxie rocks the house and saves the day.

The European premiere of this monster of a rock 'n' roll musical comedy from the Tony Award-winning creative team behind *Memphis*, Joe DiPietro and David Bryan, is based on Lloyd Kauffman's 1984 cult classic film from Troma Entertainment. It debuted off-Broadway on April 6, 2009, and won the Outer Critics Circle Award for Outstanding New Off-Broadway Musical. This production is presented by arrangement with Josef Weinberger Limited on behalf of Music Theatre International of New York.

Writer Joe DiPietro says: "*The Toxic Avenger* is a modern, musical superhero and the world leader in the fight against pollution, corruption and evil politicians. So how brilliant that he's finally going where he's needed most: London."

The Toxic Avenger will open at the Southwark Playhouse on April 22. For more details, you can visit the theatre's website *southwarkplayhouse.co.uk*

■ **SUPERHERO SENSATION: The Toxic Avenger can be seen at Southwark Playhouse later this month**



Show Boat steams into the West End

CASTING has been officially announced for the West End transfer of *Show Boat*. The classic musical proved to be huge success during its run at Sheffield's Crucible Theatre and will transfer to the New London Theatre on April 9.

The show will star Malcolm Sinclair (Captain Andy Hawks) and Chris Peluso (Gaylord Ravenal), who will join original Sheffield cast members Gina Beck (Magnolia Hawks), Lucy Briers (Parthy Ann Hawks), Rebecca Trehearn (Julia La Verne), Emmanuel Kojo (Joe), Sandra Marvin (Queenie), Alex Young (Ellie May Chipley) and Danny Collins (Frank Schultz) in Daniel Evans' five-star production.

Based on the novel *Show Boat* by Edna Ferber, the show is considers to be one of the most romantic musicals of all time. Set against the backdrop of America's Deep South at the turn of the 20th century, *Show Boat* tells a powerful story of freedom, loyalty and above all, love.

Peluso (Ravenal) has recently been seen at the Prince Edward Theatre playing Chris in *Miss Saigon* when he made his West End debut. Previously his Broadway credits include *Beautiful – The Carole King Musical*, *Assassins*, Elton John's *Lestat* and *Mamma Mia!*

Beck's theatre credits include the role of Glinda in *Wicked,* both in the West End and on tour in the US, Christine in *The Phantom of the Opera* at Her Majesty's Theatre and Cosette in *Les Misérables* at the Queen's Theatre.

Spanning 40 pivotal years in American history, this epic musical follows the lives and loves of three generations aboard the Cotton Blossom show boat as it plies the Mississippi River – and features the timeless songs *Ol' Man River, Make Believe* and *Can't Help Lovin' Dat Man* with music by Jerome Kern and book and lyrics by Oscar Hammerstein II.

Showboat will run at the New London Theatre from April 9. If you would like more details you can visit the website *showboatmusical.co.uk*

Talk of the town

Theatrical event of the century? It's a Close call

Sunset Boulevard *****

IF the opening night performance is anything to go by, West End history will be made over the next five weeks with the truly remarkable revival of Sir Andrew Lloyd Webber's *Sunset Boulevard, writes Nicky Sweetland.*

The cast is led by the sensational Glen Close, who won a Tony award as the fading movie star Norma Desmond when she played the role on Broadway. But there is nothing faded about this real-life Hollywood icon, who is thoroughly captivating from start to finish and puts on a performance not to be missed.

The show is based on the classic 1950s Billy Wilder film and sees struggling writer Joe Gillis happen across the movie star's Sunset Boulevard mansion in a bid to escape the debt collectors. A complicated relationship is born between the star desperate for approval and the writer who is enjoying the trappings of wealth but there are some unnerving consequences.

Michael Xavier is utterly absorbing as the tormented writer alongside the beautiful Siobhan Dillon as Betty Schaefer, whose vocals are simply gorgeous. Their duet, *Too Much in Love to Care*, is one of my all-time favourites and is a real work of art. As the former director-turned-butler Max Von Mayerling, Fred Johanson impresses with a grand, earthy resonance, but it's Close who quite rightly inspires the biggest audience response with a momentous master class in stage craft.

The English National Opera's semi staged production enjoys a full orchestra which means the sumptuous score, which is in my opinion Lloyd Webber's greatest work, allows this exquisite cast to soar and inspires a feeling of utter joy to permeate throughout the auditorium.

Forget the theatrical event of the year, this is the theatrical event of the century.

Sunset Boulevard runs at the London Coliseum until May 7. If you would like more details, you can visit the website *eno.org*

■ **MOVING ON: Glenn Close (Norma Desmond) with Michael Xavier (Joe Gillis), Top: the cast** Picture: Richard Hubert Smith

Staunton and Dench star at the Oliviers

THE 40th annual Olivier awards were staged at the Royal Opera House in Covent Garden on Sunday evening and fans from around the world tuned in to see who had scooped the coveted accolades.

As expected, the Chichester Festival Theatre production of *Gypsy* at the Savoy Theatre came off best, scooping four prizes, with acclaimed leading lady Imelda Staunton taking the Best Actress in a Musical award and her co-star Lara Pulver gaining the Best Actress in a Supporting Role gong. The show also won Best Revival and Best Lighting Design.

Hot on its heels was the vibrant new musical *Kinky Boots,* which scored three wins, including Best Actor in a Musical for Matt Henry and Best New Musical. Cyndi Lauper's spectacular also won Best Costume Design.

History was made by Dame Judi Dench,who won a record eighth Olivier Award for her portrayal of Paulina in the Kenneth Branagh Theatre Company's production of *The Winter's Tale* at the Garrick Theatre. She has now won more Olivier Awards for acting than any other performer.

Surprise! Groundhog Day comes round again

A SHOW which promises to go around and around again will open later this year at the Old Vic Theatre.

The brand new musical adaptation of *Groundhog Day* will have its world premiere in July, with tickets for the hugely anticipated new stage spectacular on sale from the April 12.

Old Vic artistic director Matthew Warchus has joined forces with the multi award winning composer of *Matilda the Musical*, Tim Minchin, to produce the musical, which is based on the 1993 hit film which starred Bill Murray.

The plot follows Phil Connors, who is sent to cover the annual Groundhog Day event in the small isolated town of Punxsutawney, Pennsylvania. He finds himself caught in a time loop and is forced to repeat the same day again and again.

Each day plays out exactly the same as the one before, but will he ever unlock and break the cycle?

The award-winning choreographer Peter Darling and acclaimed designer Rob Howell complete the artistic team behind the show.

They have collaborated with original screenwriter Danny Rubin, to bring *Groundhog Day* to the stage and the show will star Andy Karl as the pessimistic journalist.

Groundhog Day will run at the Old Vic Theatre from July 11 to September 17. For more details you can visit the website *oldvictheatre.com*

Classified

Post: London Weekly News, Yeoman House, 63 Croydon Road, Penge, SE20 7TS
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6. Works would be expected to commence on Wednesday 4th May 2016 and last for 2 days. The dates specified are for guidance and informative purposes only and works may extend outside these dates.

Dated this 30th day of March 2016.

Nicholas Ruxton-Boyle
Chief Transport Planner
Transport and Highways

Public Notices

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Nicholas Ruxton-Boyle
Chief Transport Planner
Transport and Highways

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70 Uxbridge Road London W12 8LP 2016/01355/ADV
Retention of internally illuminated ATM surround to the front elevation.
14 Ceylon Road London W14 0PY 2016/01305/FUL
Erection of an additional floor at roof level; erection of a rear extension at first and second floor levels, on top of existing back addition; erection of a single storey rear extension, to the side and rear of the existing back addition at ground floor level.
60 Sundew Avenue London W12 0RR 2016/01304/FUL
Erection of a single storey extension to side of main building; felling of a Silver Birch Tree subject to tree preservation order TPO/98/10/83; erection of new brick wall and entrance gate to the side of the main building.
75 Brook Green London W6 7BE 2016/01085/FUL
Conversion of the existing property from 4no. flats into a single family dwelling house; erection of a rear roof extension; erection of a rear extension at second floor level on top of the existing back addition; erection of a part one, part two, part three storey rear extension at lower ground, ground and first floor levels, including the formation of roof terraces at ground and first floor levels; and reinstatement of original stone steps and railings to the front elevation at ground floor level.
Books For Amnesty 181 King Street Hammersmith W6 9JT 2016/01128/ADV
Display of a non-illuminated fascia sign on the front elevation.
17 Bryony Road London W12 0SR 2016/01339/FUL
Conversion of a single family dwelling house into 2no. two bedroom self-contained flats.
93-95 Gunterstone Road London W14 9BT 2016/01375/VAR
Removal of condition 7 (obscure glazed screen) of planning permission ref: 2013/05368/FUL granted 11th February 2014.
24 Stamford Brook Road London W6 0XH 2016/01280/FUL
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61 South Africa Road London W12 7PA 2015/05456/FUL
Installation of an ATM machine to the front elevation (Amended site address).
61 South Africa Road London W12 7PA 2015/05457/ADV
Display of an internally illuminated ATM surround to the front elevation (Amended site address).
108 - 112 Blythe Road London W14 0HD 2016/01234/FUL
Demolition of existing single storey storage building (Class B8) and erection of 2 x two storey buildings to provide 4no Mews houses; associated landscaping.
104 King Street London W6 0QW 2016/01230/FUL
Redevelopment of the site comprising the erection of eight single family dwellings (3 x two storey mews houses to the rear of nos.13-23 Cambridge Grove, 1 x two storey mews house at the northern end of the site adjacent to the railway bridge; and 4 x three storey plus-basement dwelling houses fronting on to Argyle Place); retention of the two storey office building at the southern end of the site (to provide 208 sqm of Class B1 office space) following construction of new roof and side extension, and elevational alterations; provision of 6 no. off street parking spaces; following demolition of all existing timber yard structures on the site and the roof and two storey extension to the office building at the site entrance on Dimes Place.
14 Perrers Road London W6 0EZ 2016/01213/FUL
Erection of an additional floor at roof level.
66 Macfarlane Road London W12 7LA 2016/01117/FUL
Change of use of premises from a Light Industrial Use (Class B1(c)) to a Health Centre (Class D2) providing a range of services such as Osteopathy, Sports Massage, Yoga, Pilates, Mindfulness and Personal Training.
Rose Villa Fulham Park Road London SW6 4LJ 2016/01241/FUL
Demolition and re-building of single storey garage building.
58 Nasmyth Street London W6 0HB 2016/01316/FUL
Amendments to previously approved planning permission ref: 2014/06035/FUL granted 16th February 2015 to allow the installation of a new door and 2no windows in place of the double glazed doors at ground floor level and relocation of 1no window at first floor level to the rear elevation.
121 - 140 Hamlet Gardens London W6 0TR 2016/01318/FUL
Amendments to previously approved planning permission ref: 2015/06098/FUL granted 7th March 2016 to replace the approved 12mm double glazed units with standard 24mm units within sliding sash and casement windows at the rear elevation of the mansion blocks.
FOR CONSERVATION AREA CONSENT (DEMOLITION WORK)
FOR LISTED BUILDING CONSENT
FOR DEVELOPMENT WHICH MAY AFFECT THE SETTING OR CONTEXT OF A LISTED BUILDING
Books For Amnesty 181 King Street Hammersmith W6 9JT 2016/01128/ADV
Display of a non-illuminated fascia sign on the front elevation.
2 - 4 Peterborough Mews London SW6 3BL 2016/01066/FUL
Erection of a hip to gable end roof extension; lowering the ridge height of the main roof and erection of an additional floor at roof level; excavation under the footprint of the building in connection with the formation of a new basement; erection of new trellis at the front of the building; alterations to the front forecourt; raising of the front and rear parapet walls; alterations to the first floor roof of back addition to include installation of a new glazed rooflight; alterations to the front fenestration to include installation of new windows at first floor level, new windows and doors at ground floor level to replace the existing doors and windows; alterations to the rear fenestration to include installation of new windows to replace the existing windows at ground floor level.
Anyone who wishes to make representations about these applications should do so by 24th April 2016. See below for ways of commenting on applications.
THE TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE) ORDER 2013
NOTICES UNDER REGULATION
131 Gayford Road London W12 9BY 2016/01233/FUL
I give notice that Palladian Development Limited is applying to HAMMERSMITH & FULHAM COUNCIL for planning permission to carry out the following development: Demolition of existing building and redevelopment of the site to provide a residential scheme (Use Class C3) comprised of six units within two buildings comprised of two and three storeys including part basement and associated plant, landscaping and cycle parking.
309 - 311 North End Road London W14 9NS 2016/01248/FUL
I give notice that Mr Shaun Counihan is applying to HAMMERSMITH & FULHAM COUNCIL for planning permission to carry out the following development: Demolition of the existing building with the exception of part of front facade and party walls, erection of a replacement part one, part two, part three and part four storey plus-basement building comprising amalgamation of 2no commercial units located at ground and lower ground floor level into one commercial unit including the change of use from pawnbroker (Class A2) and payday loan shop (Class Sui-Generis) into a cafe (A3), conversion of first, second and third floor level to provide 2 x studio, 4 x one bedroom and 2 x two bedroom self-contained flats with roof terraces to 6no flats, installation of new shopfronts and windows to replace the existing at the front elevation; installation of new front pavement lights.
Anyone who wishes to make representations about these applications should do so by **24th April 2016**. See below for ways of commenting on applications.
Signed: **NIGEL PALLACE**
Executive Director for Transport and Technical Services on behalf of HAMMERSMITH & FULHAM COUNCIL
You can view applications, make comments and monitor their progress on our website: www.lbhf.gov.uk/planning. Click on the 'Planning Online' logo on the Planning Home Page.
You can also E-mail comments to: plancomments@lbhf.gov.uk
You can also inspect details of applications using computers at our office RECEPTION FIRST FLOOR HAMMERSMITH TOWN HALL EXTENSION KING STREET W6 between 9.00am and 5.00pm, Monday to Friday, excluding public holidays.
If you want to make comments on applications please E-mail them through our website or post them to **DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT SERVICE ENVIRONMENT SERVICES DEPARTMENT TOWN HALL KING STREET W6 9JU** by the date shown above. Please include the application reference number and the name of the planning officer. We will try to consider any representations received after the date indicated but this cannot be guaranteed so please reply promptly. For initial enquiries call our information and reception service on **020 8753 1081 or 020 8753 1082.**

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Public Notices

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LONDON BOROUGH OF HAMMERSMITH AND FULHAM

ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 SECTION 14(1)

(ARGON MEWS)

TEMPORARY PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC

1. The Council of the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham hereby gives notice that in order to facilitate utility installation works to be carried out in the above named road, it intends to make an Order the effect of which would prohibit vehicular traffic in the above named road.
2. Whilst works are in progress, or whilst the authorised traffic signs are displayed, no person shall cause any vehicle to proceed, stop, wait, load or unload in Argon Mews.
3. An alternative route for traffic in article 2 would not be required.
4. Exemptions would be provided in the Order to permit reasonable access to premises, so far as it is practical without interference with the execution of the said work and for works vehicles, any vehicle being used in connection with police, fire or ambulance purposes and anything done with the permission or at the direction of a police constable in uniform.
5. The Order would come into operation on the 20th April 2016 and would be valid for a maximum period of 18 months or until works are completed, whichever is the sooner.
6. Works would be expected to commence on Wednesday 20th April 2016 and last for 3 days. The dates specified are for guidance and informative purposes only and works may extend outside these dates.

Dated this 29th day of March 2016.

Nicholas Ruxton-Boyle
Chief Transport Planner
Transport and Highways

LONDON BOROUGH OF HAMMERSMITH AND FULHAM

ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 SECTION 14(1)

(BEAUFORT MEWS)

TEMPORARY PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC

1. The Council of the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham hereby gives notice that in order to facilitate utility works to be carried out in the above named road, it made an Order the effect of which prohibts vehicular traffic in a section of the above named road.
2. Whilst works are in progress, or whilst the authorised traffic signs are displayed, no person shall cause any vehicle to proceed, stop, wait, load or unload in Beaufort Mews.
3. An alternative route for traffic in article 2 would not be required.
4. Exemptions would be provided in the Order to permit reasonable access to premises, so far as it is practical without interference with the execution of the said work and for works vehicles, any vehicle being used in connection with police, fire or ambulance purposes and anything done with the permission or at the direction of a police constable in uniform.
5. The Order would come into operation on the 12th April 2016 and would be valid for a maximum period of 18 months or until works are completed, whichever is the sooner.
6. Works would be expected to commence on Tuesday 12th April 2016 and last for 7 days. The dates specified are for guidance and informative purposes only and works may extend outside these dates.

Dated this 29th day of March 2016

Nicholas Ruxton-Boyle
Chief Transport Planner
Transport and Highways

LONDON BOROUGH OF HAMMERSMITH AND FULHAM

ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 SECTION 14(1)

(BURLINGTON ROAD)

TEMPORARY PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC

1. The Council of the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham hereby gives notice that in order to facilitate Thames Water works to be carried out in the above named road, it intends to make an Order the effect of which would prohibit vehicular traffic in a section the above named road.
2. Whilst works are in progress, or whilst the authorised traffic signs are displayed, no person shall cause any vehicle to proceed, stop, wait, load or unload in a section of Burlington Road between its junctions with Fulham Road and Rigault Road.
3. An alternative route for traffic in article 2 would be in place via Rigault Road, Landridge Road and Fulham Road.
4. Exemptions would be provided in the Order to permit reasonable access to premises, so far as it is practical without interference with the execution of the said work and for works vehicles, any vehicle being used in connection with police, fire or ambulance purposes and anything done with the permission or at the direction of a police constable in uniform.
5. The Order would come into operation on the 25th April 2016 and would be valid for a maximum period of 18 months or until works are completed, whichever is the sooner.
6. Works would be expected to commence on Monday 25th April 2016 and last for 1 day. The dates specified are for guidance and informative purposes only and works may extend outside these dates.

Dated this 3rd day of March 2016.

Chris Bainbridge
Head of Transport Policy & Network Management
Transport & Technical Services

LONDON BOROUGH OF HAMMERSMITH AND FULHAM

ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 SECTION 14(1)

(FULHAM PALACE ROAD)

TEMPORARY PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC

1. The Council of the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham hereby gives notice that in order to facilitate development works to be carried out in the above named road, it intends to make an Order the effect of which would prohibit pedestrian traffic on a section of the footway on the above named road.
2. Whilst works are in progress, or whilst the authorised traffic signs are displayed, no person shall proceed along a section of the footway on Fulham Palace Road between no. 73 Fulham Palace Road its junction with Yeldham Road.
3. A diversion for pedestrian traffic in article 2 would be provided via the western footpath on Fulham Palace Road.
4. Exemptions would be provided in the Order to permit reasonable access to premises, so far as it is practical without interference with the execution of the said work and for works vehicles, any vehicle being used in connection with police, fire or ambulance purposes and anything done with the permission or at the direction of a police constable in uniform.
5. The Order would come into operation on the 25th April 2016 and would be valid for a maximum period of 18 months or until works are completed, whichever is the sooner.
6. Works would be expected to commence on Monday 25th April 2016 and last for 5 days. The dates specified are for guidance and informative purposes only and works may extend outside these dates.

Dated this 29th day of March 2015.

Nicholas Ruxton-Boyle
Chief Transport Planner
Transport and Highways

LONDON BOROUGH OF HAMMERSMITH AND FULHAM

ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 SECTION 14(1)

(KING STREET)

TEMPORARY PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC

1. The Council of the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham hereby gives notice that in order to facilitate utility inspection works to be carried out in the above named road, it intends to make an Order the effect of which would prohibit vehicular traffic in a section of the above named road.
2. Whilst works are in progress, or whilst the authorised traffic signs are displayed, no person shall cause any vehicle to proceed, stop, wait, load or unload in a section of King Street between its junctions with Queen Caroline Street and Angel Walk.
3. An alternative route for traffic in article 2 would be in place via Shepherd's Bush Road, Goldhawk Road, Paddenswick Road and Dalling Road.
4. Exemptions would be provided in the Order to permit reasonable access to premises, so far as it is practical without interference with the execution of the said work and for works vehicles, any vehicle being used in connection with police, fire or ambulance purposes and anything done with the permission or at the direction of a police constable in uniform.
5. The Order would come into operation on the 24th April 2016 and would be valid for a maximum period of 18 months or until works are completed, whichever is the sooner.
6. Works would be expected to commence on Sunday 24th April 2016 and last for 2 days. The dates specified are for guidance and informative purposes only and works may extend outside these dates.

Dated this 30th day of March 2016

Nicholas Ruxton-Boyle
Chief Transport Planner
Transport and Highways

LONDON BOROUGH OF HAMMERSMITH AND FULHAM

ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 SECTION 14(1)

(KING STREET)

TEMPORARY PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC

1. The Council of the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham hereby gives notice that in order to facilitate utility installation works to be carried out in the above named road, it intends to make an Order the effect of which would suspend a section of the cycle lane in the above named road.
2. Whilst works are in progress, or whilst the authorised traffic signs are displayed, the cycle lane on King Street shall be suspended between it's junction with Studland Street and No. 158 King Street.
3. An alternative route for traffic in article 2 would not be required.
4. Exemptions would be provided in the Order to permit reasonable access to premises, so far as it is practical without interference with the execution of the said work and for works vehicles, any vehicle being used in connection with police, fire or ambulance purposes and anything done with the permission or at the direction of a police constable in uniform.
5. The Order would come into operation on the Monday 25th April 2016 and would be valid for a maximum period of 18 months or until works are completed, whichever is the sooner.
6. Works would be expected to commence on Monday 25th April 2016 and last for 5 days. The dates specified are for guidance and informative purposes only and works may extend outside these dates.

Dated this 30th day of March 2016

Nicholas Ruxton-Boyle
Chief Transport Planner
Transport and Highways

LONDON WEEKLY JOBS

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Chestnut Grove Academy

45 Chestnut Grove, Balham, London SW12 8JZ
Headteacher: Christian Kingsley MA, MSc, NPQH
Ofsted 2008 'an Outstanding school'

PREMISES OFFICER Required for May 2016
Full Time – 36 hours per week (shift work required)
Scale 2 Salary: £18,933 p.a. paid overtime available

We are looking for a Premises Officer to join our friendly and professional site maintenance team. You will need to be flexible and able to undertake a variety of premises and security related duties, using a range of skills including electrical, carpentry, decorating and cleaning. You will have a positive "can do" attitude, good communication skills, work well under pressure and enjoy working as part of a team in a busy school environment.

TEACHING ASSISTANTS Required asap
Term Time Only (39 weeks a year) – 30 hours per week
Scale 1c Point 8, Actual salary: £12,208 p.a.

We are looking for enthusiastic and committed candidates to join our outstanding team of teaching assistants. You will work to support students with Education Health and Care Plans who have a range of cognitive and behavioural needs.

Experience of working with young people with ASD or SEMH is highly desirable. You will need a positive attitude, excellent communication skills, ability to work as part of a team, flexibility and a desire to make a difference.

Further information and application packs are available from the school's website: www.chestnutgrove.wandsworth.sch.uk or by contacting Sheila Payen on 0208 673 8737.

CLOSING DATE FOR BOTH POSTS: Monday 11th April 2016 at noon
INTERVIEWS FOR BOTH POSTS: w/c Monday 18th April 2016

ALL POSTS SUBJECT TO DBS CHECKS.

Chestnut Grove is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

www.chestnutgrove.wandsworth.sch.uk

General

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To apply for the above positions forward your CV and a covering letter to
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Closing date 8th April 2016
Unfortunately, if you have not received a response within four weeks of application, you have not been successful on this occasion

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CONDITIONS OF ACCEPTANCE FOR ALL ADVERTISEMENTS

Orders are accepted by the Publishers subject to the Standard Conditions agreed between the Newspaper Society and the Institute of Practitioners in Advertising. Save that:

1. Advertisements are accepted on the conditions that (a) descriptions relating to goods are accurate and in no way contravene the provisions of the Trade Descriptions Act 1968, and the Fair Trading Act 1973, and (b) the copy complies with the British Code of Advertising Practice. Advertisements offering credit or hire facilities must conform to the Consumer Credit (Advertisements) Regulations 1980.
2. 'Classified' Advertisers offering goods or service of a business, commercial or trade nature will, at the discretion of the Publishers, be deemed 'Trade Advertisers', and as such, must include their names in advertisements. A telephone number is an optional addition to these requirements and not an alternative.
To comply with the Business Advertisements (Disclosure) Order 1977, Trade Advertisers must make it clear that they are selling goods in the course of business either by content, format, size or place of the advertisement or by including words such as 'trade', 'dealer', 'agent', 'wholesaler', '(T)' etc. in the advertisement.
3. The Publishers accept no liability whatsoever for any loss or damage however caused arising out of:
(a) Any error, inaccuracy or omission in the printing or publishing of any advertisement;
(b) Any failure to publish an advertisement on the day / date or day / dates specified by the advertiser; or
(c) Any delay in forwarding or omission to forward replies to box numbers to the Advertiser.
4. The Publishers will endeavour to publish advertisements on the day / date or day / dates specified by the Advertiser but insertion days / dates cannot be guaranteed.
5. Where shrinkage of advertisement occurs for whatever reasons the advertisement will be charged to the nearest full centimetre. This will NOT apply to the full-page advertisements, which remain full pages even after shrinkage.
6. The Publishers reserve the right to reject an advertisement or to vary it in any way they deem fit, at any time before publication, whether or not the advertisement has already been accepted for publication.
7. Whilst every effort is made to minimise errors in advertisements, mistakes do sometimes occur. Advertisers or their agents should therefore check their advertisements and inform us of any errors immediately. Responsibility cannot be accepted for more than one incorrect insertion. Typographical or minor changes, which do not affect the value of the advertisement, do not qualify for republication or allowances.
8. All gross advertising rates (except classified lineage and semi-display) are subject to and include a 0.1% Advertising Standards Board of Finance surcharge, payable by the advertisers to help finance the self-regulatory control system administered by the Advertising Standards Authority.
9. All rates quoted are subject to VAT at the rate currently in force at the time the advertisement appears.
10. Should the rate for advertisements be altered the price for remaining insertions shall be revised accordingly or the publishers shall have the right to cancel the unexpired portion of the order.
11. The placing of an advertisement order will be deemed an acceptance of these conditions.
12. Account facilities are granted at the discretion of the Company.
13. All accounts must be settled within the terms agreed by the Company and the Customer.
(1) Should an advertiser be in breach of the agreed terms, the publisher shall be entitled to levy a 10% surcharge on the value of the whole debt in respect of accounts with terms of less than 30 days, and any discounts or commissions that had been allowed will be reclaimed.
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14. Where an advertiser instructs / appoints an advertising agent to act on their behalf, the advertiser will remain jointly and severally liable for payment in respect for an advertisement(s) should the appointed agent fail to pay. For the avoidance of doubt, the agent acts for the advertiser and not for the publisher with the agent being responsible for notifying the advertiser of this liability.
15. All queries must be notified, preferably in writing to the accounts department of the publisher within 7 days of the invoice date.
16. All digital services are maintained in partnership with the publishers' hosting service providers. Every effort is made to ensure the continuity of these services, but some occasional technical downtime beyond the publishers control may occur. The publisher and its associated companies shall be under no liability if the production and distribution of web services is delayed or prevented by any cause beyond the control of the publisher.
17. The Publisher may provide voucher copies for published advertisements in electronic form only subject to certain criteria. Further information is available on request.
18. The copyright of advertisements produced wholly or partially by the Publishers belong to the Publishers. Advertisers may not reproduce such advertisements without the Publishers' consent.

Box Numbers
Boxes are open for the receipt of bona fide answers and are not available for distribution of trade canvassing matter. Original testimonials, goods, cash, cash stamps or payments of any kind must not be enclosed. A box Number and postal address are charged as part of the advertisement, i.e. Box No., centre address. There is no charge for forwarding replies.
Box numbers alone are not available for use in 'Trade' advertisements, other than Employment and Business Opportunities.

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All advertising must contain the name of the advertiser, phone number alone are not permitted.

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The service you have requested may require us to carry out a credit search at a credit-referencing agency, which will record the fact that a search has been made. We may need to share your information with other lenders and credit reference agencies. However, we will only use the information from these searches to make credit-granting decisions and, if necessary, for fraud prevention or tracing debtors.
Data controller will use your information for administration and analysis. We may share your information with other Tindle Group Newspaper companies or carefully selected third parties. We, or they, may send you details of other goods and services, which may be of interest to you. The information may be provided by letter, telephone or other reasonable means of communication. Calls may be recorded or monitored for training purposes.
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Replay would have proved Rangers right

LOFTUS ROAD RANGERS REVIEW
With Tony McDonald

LIKE a good many other managers throughout the country, and no doubt across Europe, Queens Park Rangers boss Jimmy Floyd Hasselbaink had cause to curse an official's mistake that cost his team a perfectly legitimate goal – and a league point – last weekend.

The moment of controversy came in the 71st minute of Friday's 3-2 home defeat by Middlesbrough, when Seb Polter's 'goal' was ruled out by the linesman who mistakenly thought the ball had gone out of play before Junior Hoilett crossed it from the byline to the German for an easy tap-in.

Unfortunately for the official, the Sky TV cameras were at Loftus Road to highlight his error to an audience of millions.

An aggrieved Hasselbaink said: "I don't like to moan about the officials, but the big decisions aren't going our way at the moment. That is a fact.

"We had a perfectly good goal disallowed tonight.

"Last weekend (at Preston) we had a decision go against us when the referee only showed a yellow card when it should have been a red card.

"The week before that it was something else."

You can sympathise with Hasselbaink and all the other managers whose teams are wronged – their jobs are on the line – but only to a point.

I'll never stop banging on about the need for video replays to decide all the big calls in the game.

How hard can it be for a Video Replay Referee (VRR) – in radio contact with the on-field ref – to quickly view replays of all the major incidents on a TV monitor at the side of the pitch, or up in the stand? Every Premier League and Football League ground is equipped with cameras these days, so replays of the game-changing moments – goals, penalties, red cards, offsides, mistaken identity – could be reviewed and the correct decision arrived at within seconds.

Of course, you cannot allow managers to challenge every decision. So give them, say, two opportunities each per half to challenge a call. If the replay subsequently proves them right, then they keep their challenge. Get it wrong and they lose one.

Even if the technology currently in place at all League One and League Two grounds is deemed not up to scratch, there is no reason why Premier League and Championship clubs cannot embrace this long overdue change from the start of next season. Better to use technology to get some of these decisions right than none.

Cricket, tennis and rugby have all benefited from video replay reviews, so why doesn't professional football?

Yes, the Premier League brought in goal-line technology a few years back and it's been a proven success. But the authorities still haven't not gone far enough in eliminating the inevitable human errors that decide matches.

Disrupt flow

The main weak argument against the introduction of video replays is that it will disrupt the flow of matches. Nonsense. It would take the VRR no longer than referees now spend trying to placate groups of irate players contesting every controversial decision given against them.

How long does it take for a tennis umpire to view a replay of Hawkeye to decide a line call, or a fourth umpire of a cricket Test match to check an lbw appeal? If anything, these reviews often add to the drama for both the spectators and TV audience.

Bosses at Sky and BT Sport, who pay billions for TV rights, won't push for the big controversial moments to be settled swiftly and correctly, or as correct as they possibly can be where cameras are used. That would deny their commentators, studio pundits and viewers the opportunity to debate endless replays of incidents which become major talking points for days afterwards.

But the English game is becoming increasingly quicker and officials need help now more than ever before.

Yes, we are often dismayed by what we see as incompetence on the part of the match officials who have never played the game at a reasonable level. But you have to feel a degree of sympathy for them, too. Not only do they have to maintain excellent levels of fitness to keep up with a fast-moving game, they are often put on the spot – and subjected to abuse by fans – through the cynical actions of cheating players who feign injury, dive and try every other trick in the book to con them.

There has been talk of a video review system being trialled over the next couple of seasons, but England should be leading the way, not dragging its heels. The Premier League and Football League clubs should be championing the use of video replay evidence but have done little or nothing to make it happen.

The financial stakes are so high these days. It may not matter much to QPR in the grand scheme of things that Polter's 'goal' was wrongly ruled out, but the difference between a draw and an away win for Middlesbrough could ultimately prove crucial for the other teams competing with them for a precious promotion place and all the millions Premier League status now guarantees.

The traditionalists dismiss such innovation with cliches such as, 'these things even themselves out over the course of the season'. But do they? What if the extra two points Middlesbrough took away from W12 last Friday end up securing them promotion at the expense of a rival club?

Abysmal

It wasn't just a linesman's flag that cost Rangers at least a draw. Abysmal defending certainly contributed to their downfall.

"Of course it's a disappointing result to take," said Hasselbaink. "Their first goal came from an individual mistake – it is what it is – but we came back and scored a deserved equaliser through a good goal by (Jamie) Mackie.

"But we didn't start the second half well. I think if you analyse my time here, we don't concede goals from corners and tonight we've conceded two. That's disappointing.

"We switched off, which is unlike us from set-pieces. We switched off after the penalty save from Alex (Smithies) and you can't do that at this level.

"But then after that, we kept going. We kept plugging away at them.

"We had a fair goal disallowed, but that still didn't deter us and we got another good goal back. It was a lovely strike from Chery."

He added: "Yes, we've lost the game tonight, but I can take positives from it. We showed character, we showed spirit – but the result was not with us.

"I think the QPR fans' reaction at full-time showed they appreciated aspects of our performance.

"Middlesbrough's staff and players know we gave them a difficult game tonight – and they were fortunate to get the three points."

After visiting Leeds, where JFH was once a star player, on Tuesday, Hoops will host London rivals Charlton at Loftus Road on Saturday.

FOOTBALL FIXTURES

Saturday, April 9
Swansea City v CHELSEA, 3.00
FULHAM v Cardiff City, 3.00
QPR v Charlton Athletic, 3.00

■ JIMMY Floyd Hasselbaink felt his team was robbed Pic: Rob Newell/Digital South

Britton loses cancer battle

■ FORMER Chelsea midfielder Ian Britton has died, aged 61, following a long battle with prostate cancer.

Popular Britton made 289 appearances and scored 34 goals during a 10-year spell with Blues between 1972 and 1982.

He joined the west Londoners as an apprentice from his local team Hillside Rangers in his native Scotland.

A lively midfielder, Britton made his debut against Derby County at Stamford Bridge in 1972-73.

He was part of a team of largely home-grown players who took Blues back to the top flight under the management of Eddie McCreadie in 1976-77.

Diminutive, dark-haired Britton operated on the left of a midfield diamond formation that also featured Ray Wilkins, Ray Lewington and Garry Stanley.

During his time with Chelsea, Britton was part of the team that famously beat the then European champions Liverpool in a 4-2 victory in the FA Cup third round at The Bridge in 1978.

He left Blues in 1982.

Following short spells with Dundee United and Arbroath, he spent three years at Blackpool before moving to Division Four strugglers Burnley, whom he saved from relegation to the Conference by scoring the winning goal against Leyton Orient in May 1987.

Despite finishing his playing career in the north-west, where he opened a fitness centre, Britton never lost his love for Chelsea and played for Chelsea Old Boys, alongside former team-mates, on numerous occasions.

■ CHELSEA from back page

Although they have no trophies to play for in their last seven games of the season, Miazga is convinced Chelsea's future is in good hands.

"Yeah, this club has brilliant players with world-class experience and also young up-and-coming players, like Ruben Loftus-Cheek and Jake Clarke-Salter and a lot of other young players who train with the first team. The club is in good hands. We just have to continue to work hard on the pitch and focus ourselves and contribute anyway we can."

While Miazga is full of the confidence of youth, Hiddink, as ever, takes a more pragmatic view of his performance but is still encouraged for Chelsea's future.

The 69-year-old, who will leave Stamford Bridge again at the end of the season, said of his American debutant: "Miazga had a rather comfortable game, although it is not easy to play against Gestede. But he did well, he was good in his duels. I think sometimes he could have made more space between himself and Gestede but he showed he has potential.

"To be honest, this was not the toughest game. You'll have to consider him when the real good war is going on and see how he copes with that. But it is a good first step up for him," Hiddink said.

Asked what he thought Miazga needed to add to his game, the Dutchman continued: "He's come from a league where it is a bit naïve. The Premier League is less naïve, of course. He must get used to a little bit more freedom given to the attackers by the referees in this country.

Bit of naivety

"But he has to cope with a little bit of shuffle and pushing, where in other leagues the referees might give free-kicks. I accept it and I like it very much, but I think that is a bit of naivety he has to get rid of as soon as possible.

Is he one for the future, then? Hiddink replied: "Yes, but what is the future? He's young. He looks a bit older than he is, but he is young. The club have to decide what to do for next year but it's good to see him in these games. I don't mind bringing in youngsters, like Loftus-Cheek, who was brought in earlier in the season, and Jake Clarke-Salter, who came on for the last 15 minutes. It's good to see the youngsters in this late part of the season."

Loftus-Cheek's opener in Saturday's 4-0 win was his first league goal for Blues. Hiddink was keen to push the youngster, who he initially thought was older than his tender 18 years, harder and wanted to see what he was made of.

"Normally he used to be substituted after one hour," he said. "But, on purpose, we let him go on and suffer a bit, so he also gets the experience of 90 minutes.

"He felt a little bit of cramp towards the end, but I told him, 'Come on, guy, get your cramp, it's good for you'. The young players have to suffer a bit.

"When I came in December and watched everyone without having looked at all the information about them, I thought he was 23 or 24, going by his appearance. But he was 18, 19-years-old, so we had to take that into consideration."

Hiddink believes serving up game-time for the youngsters will be a good thing for the incoming Conte.

"When you have an academy like Chelsea have had for a long time, then as a consequence it is not easy, but you must give the young players a chance to step up. That is what we are doing now."

■ THAT sort of encouragement is just what Under-18s coach Joe Edwards will be imparting on his charges as they face Blackburn Rovers at Stamford Bridge on Friday in the second leg of the FA Youth Cup semi-final.

Blues are 1-0 up from the first leg and kick-off is 7.45pm.

They warmed up nicely by coming from behind to dispatch Reading 6-2 at the weekend.

A brace of goals from Jacob Maddox and Ike Ugbo, and one apiece from Miro Muheim and Luke McCormick, was enough to raise confidence ahead of what will be a very tough match.

Paul Lagan

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RUBEN Loftus-Cheek scored his first goal for Blues in their easy win at Villa Pic: Rob Newell/Digital South

Miazga living the American dream

● By LWN reporter **Paul Lagan**
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MATT Miazga is ready and fully prepared to be thrown into action again on Saturday as Chelsea head to South Wales to face Swansea City at the Liberty Stadium.

The 20-year-old American, bought in January from MLS side New York Red Bulls, only knew on Saturday, the day of the game against Aston Villa, that he would be playing after minor injuries sidelined John Terry and Gary Cahill.

With Kurt Zouma recovering from his season-ending injury, Miazga will be keen to show his talents and impress the new manager, who is widely expected to be Antonio Conte.

Italian national team chief Conte could even be announced as successor to likeable interim boss Guus Hiddink this week.

Miazga is self-assured and came across 'The Pond' with a reputation for saying what is on his mind, but on this occasion he was firmly on message.

Asked if he was ready to make his debut in Blues' emphatic 4-0 win at Villa Park, he said: "I just control what I can control, which is work hard on the pitch and in training and hopefully give the manager a decision to make," he said.

"I am focused on myself. If I continue to get chances, I will take them.

Work hard

"To be fair, I am always ready. Once my name was called upon I had to be ready. I just got to the club, a world-class club with big players, but if my chance comes I was going to be ready and work hard on the training pitch."

Naturally, he was delighted with his debut performance, albeit against relegation-bound Aston Villa, a side rooted firmly at the bottom of the Premier League and bereft of confidence and points.

"I am very pleased," he said. "The boys did fantastic. All that matters was the three points.

"I was told on Saturday morning that I would be playing. There were a few injuries but that's football, I have to be ready and contribute to the team in any way I can."

The 6ft 4in centre-back had a tricky start, with Rudy Gestede out-jumping him twice early on, but he gradually got into his stride, ably assisted by skipper and defensive partner Branislav Ivanovic.

"In training I always pair up with different people and so I know my team-mates well now," he said. "I have been here for two months, so it was an easy transition."

The move from States-side 'soccer' to the rigours of elite European football meant Miazga had to train harder than the rest of his team-mates when he arrived.

"In the beginning I did a lot of double sessions, because I was just coming in – not even from pre-season, but from what was my off-season," he explained.

"So it was good to go with the national team recently and get some minutes and game fitness under my belt."

Entering the Villa Park cauldron, where angry home fans continue to step up their protests against the club's American owner Randy Lerner and his fellow countryman Brad Guzman was the subject of a few humiliating catcalls, was a new experience for Miazga.

"I have never played in an atmosphere where the fans are booing the home team," he said.

"But it is what it is and you have to focus on your own game and try and help your own team.

"I know Brad quite well and have been to international camp with him once or twice already. He congratulated me after the game and, obviously, we wished each other luck for the rest of the season.

"I felt bad for him, of course. You never want to see any player you know getting booed but it is football. Brad is going to keep playing, and keep playing well, and trying his best for his club. I don't know what else is going on there but I know Brad, he is a fantastic player and fantastic person, but I can only focus on my team."

Playing Swansea City will be very different to Villa. With 37 points from 32 games leaving them in 15th place, The Swans are not completely out of the relegation fight just yet.

With seven wins and eight draws, Chelsea are unbeaten in 15 league games since Hiddink took charge – the best run by a top flight side this season – and sit in 10th place, just outside Europa League contention.

Should Miazga find himself partnering Ivanovic again on Saturday, he now knows the differences between MLS and a proper Premier League encounter.

"The pace is much faster in the Premier League," he admitted. "But as soon as we scored the first goal (at Villa), we took control of the game and it was cruise control. The guys in midfield took over, so all I had to do was spray the ball to the midfielders. My job was just to stay focused on defence.

A bit nervous

"I was nervous, of course. This is the highest level and leading up to professional games you are always a bit nervous and anxious but once you step on the field, you do the business. I was ready and I was excited.

"Gestede was very good in the air and I had to be mentally ready, either to step away from him or drop and collect it. It was kind of mind games but he is a good player."

Miazga wasn't aware if his Chelsea debut had made news in the USA.

"I haven't checked my phone yet," he said afterwards, "but I am sure with a young player like me debuting in the Premier League, there is going to be some people putting it out in the media. But that doesn't really affect me. The Premier League is huge now in America and the rest of the world."

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This week at STAMFORD BRIDGE

Focus on Craven Cottage

By TONY McDONALD

Double act strike again

FULHAM took a giant step towards securing another season in the second tier with a crucial 2-1 victory over fellow relegation battlers Milton Keynes Dons at Craven Cottage.

It was a vital game Whites dare not lose and, full credit to them, they came flying out of the traps to impose themselves on the side just one place and a point below them in the Championship.

Once again, it was down to top scorers Ross McCormack and Moussa Dembélé to secure a precious three points, with their 20th and 13th league goals of the season respectively, to put a welcome four-point gap between Fulham and the bottom three.

Relieved head coach Slaviša Jokanović stated the obvious after overseeing only his third win in 15 games when he said: "Moussa and Ross are a very important part of my team. The team is suffering together but they score the goals. Ross is my top scorer and he's a clever guy."

Fulham could have been four or five goals ahead at half-time. Dembélé sliced a close-range shot over the bar and saw another effort blocked by busy Dons keeper Cody Cropper, who also made a fingertip save to deny Tom Cairney – the cultured No.10's fourth shot on or near the target. Rohan Ince was the next to put Cropper to the test with a low drive.

Even when Cropper didn't foil Fulham, a post at the Putney end came to the visitors' rescue. McCormack let fly from 25 yards but his well-struck effort cannoned back off the woodwork.

Combine well

Not only do McCormack and Dembélé score on a regular basis, they combine well as an attacking force, regularly setting up chances for each other. And so it was for Fulham's first goal in the 54th minute.

A heavy touch saw Dembélé miscontrol a through-ball – a weakness in his game he will have to eradicate if he does land a move to the Premier League – but retrieve it inches from the byline, before cutting it back for McCormack, who held off the close attention of a defender to bundle the ball home from five yards.

Dembélé and McCormack both brought further good saves out of Cropper before Fulham conceded the inevitable equaliser in the 63rd minute. Whites have kept only three clean sheets in 39 league games this season. This time, a straightforward high lob from inside Dons' half eluded Fulham's floundering defenders and found Josh Murphy wandering into acres of space. He had the simple task of lifting the ball over Fulham's hopelessly exposed keeper Marcus Bettinelli from 12 yards for the softest of soft goals.

But Fulham have always got a goal in them and, yet again, it was their 'Batman and Robin' who pulled it out of the bag when it mattered in the 75th minute.

Ryan Fredericks' deep cross beyond the far post was met by McCormack, whose side-foot volley dropped perfectly into the path of Dembélé, who drilled the winner from six yards.

"We tried to play a bit different and we created many chances but we didn't play so brilliantly," Jokanović admitted. "But at this moment, we were solid and competitive and got the points."

Talking ahead of Tuesday's visit to Preston and Saturday's home game against Cardiff, Jokanović added: "The next 'cup final' is against Preston. We will rest our bodies and our minds and be ready for the next game in three days."

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